

A SUPPORT GROUP FORUM FOR FAMILIES AND  
LOVED ONES OF THE INCARCERATED IN  
THE GREATER DAYTON, OHIO, AREA

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **A SUPPORT GROUP FORUM FOR FAMILIES AND LOVED ONES OF THE INCARCERATED IN THE GREATER DAYTON, OHIO, AREA**

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The context is Mount Carmel United Holiness Church, Dayton, Ohio. The problem of mass incarceration leaves no support for the families and loved ones of the incarcerated. If the context leaders collaborate with community leaders and participate in a symposium to gauge family interest, then the context leaders can implement a support group forum that provides collaborative resources to serve the needs of the families. The project duration was six weeks. The methodology used was pre- and post-project tests, interviews, and journaling. This project asserts that a support group for the families of the incarcerated is a viable community resource.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I thank Almighty God for providing the opportunity and the means for me to pursue my doctoral degree. I would like to extend a heartfelt appreciation and sincere gratitude to my mentors, Dr. Robert Walker, Dr. Kenneth Cummings, and Dr. Brenda Braam, along with my faculty consultant, Dr. Tolly Kennon. Thank you to Dr. Walker for his wise counsel. I also want to extend a special thanks to Dr. Kenneth Cummings for being an excellent editor and a chief encourager. I want to thank Dr. Brenda Braam for raising the level of my doctoral project by instructing me on how to forge relationships and partnerships that will last long after the doctoral project is complete. I want to thank Dr. Kent Millard, President of the United Theological Seminary, for expanding the Doctor of Ministry program and the scholarship opportunities provided. A special thank you is extended to Dr. Bridgette Weatherspoon for her admissions skills; she made the admission process seamless. It would not have been possible to complete the Doctor of Ministry program without all your relentless care and guidance.

The doctoral program stretched me beyond my limitations until I realized there was a greater work within me that the Lord wanted to refine and develop. What a blessing that I landed in the Prophetic Preaching and Praxis (P3) cohort. In P3 you are told to trust the process. I liken the process to the process of baking fresh bread. The ingredients have to be put together to form a dough. The dough is shaped and formed by kneading the dough. The dough is put aside to rise. Once it rises, it is punched down so it

can rise again. The bread is put in the oven. The final product emerges; you have trusted the process and are rewarded with the finished product. If you stop in the middle of the process, you will not complete what you set out to accomplish. There were times I wanted to stop in the middle of the process, but the P3 mentors were very supportive, persuasive, and dedicated to the P3 mentees.

My professional associates were a great encouragement also. Dr. Brenda L. Thomas planted the original seed to matriculate at the United Theological Seminary. She was the first choice of professional associates because of her strength, wisdom, and demeanor. Dr. Wanza Jackson-Mitchell encouraged me long before I began the doctoral program and came through for me in so many ways as a professional associate to push, assist, and provide a wealth of help and encouragement. Bishop Derrick J. Johnson provided wise counsel and instilled confidence in me to complete the program. These professional associates provided the expertise I needed and helped push me to the finish line. My contextual associates from Mount Carmel were so encouraging, caring, and truly family. Elder Martha Ferguson-Johnson and Sister Nikki Roland assisted in guiding and directing the workshop series to make sure my doctoral project stayed on track. I am grateful for my peer associate of the P3 focus group, Reverend Eshakhai Sobukwe, for support and encouragement that we shared on this doctoral journey.

I am indebted to Ms. Jamie Gee, the manager of the Montgomery County Reentry Program, for her immeasurable support and collaboration with my doctoral project. I am also indebted to Mr. Sterling Titus and Mrs. Robin Titus for their heartfelt support and encouragement during my doctoral project. They all went above and beyond what was expected. I also want to thank County Commissioner Debbie Lieberman, who took time

out of her busy schedule to come and present valuable information and offer encouragement to the workshop attendees during my doctoral project.

I must give a special thanks to my spiritual father, Rev. Dr. Bankole Idowu, who has gone from labor to reward. He mentored me into the kingdom and was an ever-cultivating teacher. His great wisdom and continual pursuit of knowledge inspired me to pursue the Doctor of Ministry program at the United Theological Seminary. I also give special thanks to the late Bishop Lucy McGuffey, who was the first and the most phenomenal woman I encountered in ministry. Her motto was “Love is what it does.” Most of all, I want to especially thank my mother, Mrs. Beatrice U. Baucum, for raising me to be an independent woman, an independent thinker, and to pursue higher education to improve the course of my life.

I would also like to thank my beloved family: my brother Ken; my sisters: Joyce and Elaine; my children: Dwayne, John, Joanie (the next Doctor), William, and Jordan; my nieces: Jolan and Elon; my nephews: Trent, Dwayne, Terrell; and all my grandchildren for their love and encouragement. I would like to thank my pastor, Elder Geraldine Hairston, who was ninety-two years old and loved serving the people of God until He called her home February 12, 2024. I thank God for her steadfast love and encouragement.

I want to thank Mount Carmel family members who were so encouraging, caring, and truly family; they will continue to be in my heart while on this ministry journey. To all my former church families and friends, this effort could not have been accomplished without your encouragement, for which I am abundantly indebted and eternally grateful beyond words. I want to acknowledge Pastor Tyrone McGuffey, Pastor Ruthie Sanford,



and Pastor Almeda Warren; these are the pastors who poured into me in my early ministry journey. Pastor Ruthie Sanford continues to pray for my incarcerated loved one. I want to acknowledge Minister Beverly Vaughn, my “Big Sister” in the Lord, for all of her love and support. I wish she were here to see me cross the finish line.

Finally, I want to thank my husband, Minister Dock Foy, who loved, supported, and encouraged me every step of this journey, ensuring I had everything I needed to complete the Doctor of Ministry program.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this entire doctoral dissertation and project to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who does all things well and with whom all things are possible, and to my Mom, Mrs. Beatrice Baucum, who believed I could, and I did!

I also dedicate this work to my spiritual father, the late Dr. Bankole Idowu, and to my mother in the gospel, the late Bishop Lucy McGuffey. To God be the glory for the great things He has done!

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ACI	Allen-Oakwood Correctional Institute
AI	Artificial Intelligence
Al-Anon	Alcoholics Anonymous
CBT	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
CSB	Christian Standard Bible
CT	Cultural Trauma
DCI	Dayton Correctional Institution
DOC	Department of Corrections
DMIN	Doctor of Ministry
GED	General Education Diploma
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcement
KJV	King James Version
LXX	Septuagint, abbreviation LXX, is the earliest extant Greek translation of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew.
MCOR	Montgomery County Office of Reentry
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NLT	New Living Translation
NKJV	New King James Version

NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
ODRC	Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections
P3	Prophetic Preaching and Praxis Focus Group
RCAA	Reentry Career Alliance Academy
SDT	Social Disorganization Theory
SWAT	Strategic Weapons and Tactics
UHC	United Holy Church
UTS	United Theological Seminary
US	United States
WCI	Warren Correctional Institution
WPAFB	Wright Patterson Air Force Base
YPHA	Young People's Holy Association
501c3	Non-profit, charitable organization with IRS tax-exempt status

Love is what it does.

—Bishop Lucy McGuffey, Motto shared with Isle of Patmos Church

## **INTRODUCTION**

Although it took many years before I accepted my call to the ministry, I was aware that God was present in my life and destiny. Before accepting my call to ministry, I worked as a devotional leader in the church. The devotional leaders would open every service with a hymn and a prayer. After the prayer, the service was open for testimony service. The devotional leader would direct the service, keep the service moving, and usher in the Spirit to direct the service of the Lord. They call this portion of the service “praise and worship,” but the assignment of the devotional leader is so much more important. The devotional leader sets the tone for the preached word and prepares the people’s hearts for the word of God. When you worship and praise God, your heart is prepared to receive the word of God. When your mind is elevated above your everyday circumstances and your flesh, you can receive God’s spiritual message for your growth and spiritual insight. I loved my assignment as a devotional leader.

My first ministry assignment after accepting my call was visiting the sick and elderly in hospitals and nursing homes. We went out by twos. We used our experience as devotional leaders in the hospital and nursing home ministry. We would sing hymns and songs, read scripture, and pray and anoint the patients and their rooms. I enjoyed this ministry. The patients received us with joy. We would talk, fellowship, bring toiletries, snacks, or other requested items, and leave them with a smile. We learned to limit the

time when visiting the sick so as not to tire them out. We knew that we should not make them glad twice: glad to see us come and glad to see us go!

Sometime after, I began to participate in prison ministry. I used the skills I learned from being a devotional leader and from visiting the sick and shut-in and those in nursing homes. During my years in prison ministry, my ministry developed into a teaching ministry conducting bible studies and ministering to the prison inmates. One of the well-known advocates for prison ministry in the Dayton area was Reverend Betty Hill, who was affiliated with the Wesleyan Center in West Dayton. I had an opportunity to speak to her concerning prison ministry, and through the wisdom I garnered from her, I decided that prison ministry was not my current assignment. As time progressed, family members' incarceration began to press me to get involved somehow. I began to discuss the family issues of mothers with incarcerated sons several years before considering pursuing a doctoral degree. Once I began the doctoral program at United Theological Seminary, the theme for the doctoral project began to develop.

Chapter one, Ministry Focus, speaks to my life and history that speaks to my life of discipleship, work in the church, call to ministry, and the synergy that connected my passion for ministry wedded with the pain of being a mother with a son incarcerated. This led to my hypothesis and project.

Chapter two, Biblical Foundations, highlights the passage Luke 4:14-21. This passage focuses on the marginalized and disenfranchised community. It directly relates to the doctoral project's focus on the family and loved ones of the incarcerated who suffer stigma from being related to the incarcerated population, especially if highly publicized cases are played out in the media. This doctoral project depends on the Lord, His Spirit,

and the gospel's proclamation in collaboration with, and informed by, the interdisciplinary fields of study.

The passage of scripture in Luke 4:18-19 differs slightly from the scripture passage in Isaiah 61:1-2a. A journal article entitled "Jesus and Isaiah" suggests the following:

. . . The purported reading (Isa 61:1-2) omits a phrase from Isa 61:1 ('to bind up the brokenhearted'), includes a phrase from Isa 58:6 ('to let the oppressed go free') and agrees with the LXX on reading 'recovery of sight to the blind' rather than 'release to the prisoners.'<sup>1</sup>

What is consistent in these two parallel verses is Jesus' declaration that the Spirit of the Lord God is upon Him, and He has been anointed, consecrated, and sent for the purpose of proclaiming the Gospel, the good news. Since Jesus Christ has the Spirit of the Lord God upon Him and is anointed and consecrated to teach and preach the gospel, all involved in ministry and the work of the Lord should seek the Lord's guidance and direction in fulfilling their kingdom purpose in conjunction with the interdisciplinary studies. Those called and chosen for ministry and community support must operate according to God's purpose and plan, having been called and chosen to set the captives free, open the prison doors to those who are bound, and minister to the loved ones of those who are bound; hence, they must do it in the power of the Spirit. This doctoral project seeks the Spirit of the Lord God for empowerment and fulfillment. Jesus set the precedence for ministry, and His example embodies the preeminent criteria for success.

Chapter three, Historical Foundations, outlines the historical movement of the Post Civil War prison system in the United States and its effect on the African American

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<sup>1</sup> Steve Moyise, "Jesus and Isaiah," *Neotestamentica* 43, no. 2 (2009): 263.



family and community. The post-Civil War prison system has a foundation built on an unenforced Emancipation, a botched Reconstruction, Black Codes, Jim Crow laws, and unbridled and illegal Klan activity. These activities associated with the post-Civil War prison system birthed a system of cultural trauma within the African American community that persists today. Mercadal cites how the increasing demand for and the scarcity of labor in the early 1800s indicates how the rising and waning tide of labor demand and supply shaped the U.S. penal system. This was especially apparent in Southern states that thrived on the plantation economy of enslaved African American labor. In the Southern states, post Emancipation, the enforced labor requirements of African Americans as inmates, were more severe and very harsh. The same ideology and justification that persisted in slavery was carried over after the Emancipation Proclamation and persists in the U. S. prison system today and has played a significant role in the history of the U. S. prison system and policing.<sup>2</sup> The Historical Foundations provides a historical basis for cultural trauma inherent in the African American community that informs and undergirds this doctoral project.

Chapter four, Theological Foundations, outlines the chosen themes of pastoral theology, minjung theology, Black liberation theology, and womanist theology. A person's individual theology is often based on the church or organization's structure. The theology of the Christian church can be traced back to thirteen historic creeds and confessions developed centuries ago by councils of bishops, including the foundational documents of the Nicene Creed, the Apostles' Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and the

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<sup>2</sup> Gertrudis Mercadal, "Prison Privatization in the United States: A New Strategy for Racial Control," Dissertation, Boca Raton, FL: Florida Atlantic University, 2014.

Articles of Religion. In many local churches, an affirmation of faith is recited every Sunday during the morning worship. It is an affirmation of the church body's theological foundation. Key Bible teachings and scriptural truths contained in the creeds and affirmations – along with pastoral guidance, attending church service, Bible study, and fellowship – develop individual theology and build individual faith. Theology helps believers exercise their gifts and provides the foundation for the church body. The theologies that inform this project are soteriology and theological anthropology. The theological themes explored in this doctoral thesis are pastoral theology, minjung theology, Black liberation theology, and womanist theology.

The first theological theme chosen for review is pastoral theology, which is associated with practical theology by many, but not all, theologians. Where most theological themes are steeped in theological theories and discussions, pastoral theology is concerned with the practical application of theology through preaching, teaching, and reaching the people with the word and message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is a theologically driven approach to ministry. In *Pastoral Theology: Theological Foundation for Who a Pastor is and What a Pastor Does*, the authors define pastoral theology as follows:

Pastoral Theology establishes a theological framework for ministry that is biblically derived, *historically* informed, doctrinally sound, missionally engaged, philosophically deliberate, and contextually relevant.<sup>3</sup>

The second theological theme for this doctoral project is minjung theology. Minjung theology is the people's theology, and it emphasizes social justice for the people

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<sup>3</sup> Daniel L. Akin and R. Scott Pace, *Pastoral Theology: Theological Foundations for Who a Pastor Is and What He Does* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2017), 20.

and salvation for the soul. According to Korean theologians, it is necessary to address social justice issues that include discrimination, economic disparities, and marginalization in order to present the gospel of Jesus Christ and salvation.

The third theological theme introduced is Black theology of liberation. In the African American church and community, pastoral theology entails ministering to oppressed and marginalized people; therefore, pastoral theology in the African American church and community is Black liberation theology. In his book, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, James H. Cone states the following:

In view of the biblical emphasis on liberation, it seems not only appropriate but necessary to define the Christian community as the community of the oppressed which joins Jesus Christ in his fight for the liberation of humankind. The task of theology, then, is to explicate the meaning of God's liberating activity so that those who labor under enslaving powers will see the forces of liberation are the very activity of God . . . God's activity on behalf of the oppressed.<sup>4</sup>

The fourth theological theme is womanist theology. The plight of the African American woman in the United States of America has been to live a life of double jeopardy. The African American woman is jeopardized for being of African American descent. She has a legacy of slavery, hardship, and trauma. The African American woman is also jeopardized for being a woman. She is subject to double discrimination, disenfranchisement, and marginalization. She is an African American woman in a society that created a constitution that was designed for White male supremacy. Womanist theology examines the plight of African American women and searches the scriptures to address the cause and effect while seeking a solution. Womanist theology informs the

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<sup>4</sup> James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, Fiftieth Anniversary Edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2020), 3.

doctoral project by identifying with and speaking to the strengths and weaknesses of the women who represent the majority of family support for their incarcerated loved ones.

These four theological themes inform the doctoral project. Pastoral theology lends itself to the family's need for someone to walk along with them through the process of having a family member incarcerated. It speaks to the family's need for a spiritual leader to process their grief and encourage them throughout the incarceration process and duration. Minjung theology expresses the need for healing of the people through addressing social justice issues. It is the answer for the brokenness incarceration inflicts on the family and loved ones of those who are incarcerated, as well as the answer for the incarcerated individual to find true freedom in salvation through confession of sin, reconciliation, and acknowledging the victim's *han*, with the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior. Black liberation theology is the means for the family of the incarcerated to address the effect of incarceration on the African American community. Womanist theology gives voice to the mothers, wives, fiancés, aunts, sisters, daughters, lovers, and all females who are the main supporters of incarcerated males, and also to give voice to the incarcerated female population.

Chapter five, Interdisciplinary Foundations, concentrates on Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT) under the overarching discipline of social psychology. A general definition of social psychology is the study of human behavior and how individuals or groups interact with and relate to one another, and the relationship between individuals and

groups with respect to prejudice, human affection and attraction, emotion, and thoughts or cognition.<sup>5</sup>

Social psychologists investigate human behavior, of course, but their primary concern is human behavior in a social context.<sup>6</sup> Social psychology bears a close relationship to several other fields, especially sociology and psychology. Sociology is the scientific study of human society. It examines social institutions (family, religion, politics), stratification within society (class structure, race and ethnicity, gender roles), basic social processes (socialization, deviance, social control), and the structure of social units (groups, networks, formal organizations, bureaucracies). In contrast, psychology is the scientific study of the individual and of individual behavior. Although this behavior may be social in character, it need not be. Psychology addresses such topics as human learning, perception, memory, intelligence, emotion, motivation, and personality . . . Social psychology bridges sociology and psychology.<sup>7</sup> Social psychology concerns itself with our interactions and relationships with other people. Some social psychological research examines how we as individuals feel and think about, and act towards, others that we encounter in the world.<sup>8</sup>

The Interdisciplinary Foundations overview examines social psychology as it relates to criminal justice through the guise of the cultural trauma in the African American community, social cognitive behavior, and social disorder theories.

The Interdisciplinary Foundations also examines the prevalent social psychology issues of the criminal justice system that affect the lives of many African American males and the African American community proper. This hyper-involvement can be brought about because of biased laws and policies within the criminal justice system relating to the African American population, resulting in over-policing in the African American

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<sup>5</sup> Lumen, “Social Psychology and Influences on Behavior,” <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/waymaker-psychology/chapter/what-is-social-psychology/>.

<sup>6</sup> John D. DeLamater, Daniel J. Myers, and Jessica L. Collett, *Social Psychology* (Boulder, CO: Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), 3.

<sup>7</sup> DeLamater, Myers, and Collett, *Social Psychology*, 6-7.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Wright and Hamish Macleod, “Social Psychology,” in *Get Set for Psychology* (Edinburgh, UK: University Press, 2006), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1g0b0ht.10>.

community. Either way, the result is mass incarceration. Mass incarceration in the African American community directly results in cultural trauma in the African American community. This chapter examines the cause and effect of cultural trauma in the African American community and suggests possible relief and deterrence through CBT. And finally, this chapter examines social cognitive behavior and cognitive behavior theory as it relates to the plight of the family and loved ones of those who are incarcerated in the United States prison system. The particular scientific model engaged in the chosen interdisciplinary theory with the other Foundations is the integration model through the theology of nature. Since the theme and theory deal with dualisms pervasive in Western thought and society, extensive and systemic reformulations are considered. Social disorganization theory is briefly examined regarding cultural trauma and cognitive behavior.

Chapter six, Project Analysis, gives an overview and analysis of the doctoral project. The doctoral project duration was six weeks. It consisted of a series of workshop presentations and guest speakers. The doctoral project was held on Saturdays at the Dayton Public Library West from 11:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., beginning September 2, 2023, through October 7, 2023. There was one exception on September 16, 2023, when the workshop was held at Mount Carmel UHC due to a scheduling conflict. A total of twelve participants were engaged in this doctoral project. Each session began with prayer and a welcome, and the session concluded with refreshments.

Week one began with prayer and a welcome; immediately following was the filling out the confidentiality form and the pre-project questionnaire. There was an overview of the doctoral project which included the project purpose, the abstract, the

foundations of the doctoral project, and the ministry scripture focus — which also was a part of all the following sessions. Session One gave an in-depth overview of the Biblical, Historical, Theological, and Interdisciplinary Foundations. Session one concluded with each individual giving an account of their experience with an incarcerated loved one.

Session two concentrated on the Biblical Foundations and emphasized the importance of prayer and being spiritually grounded throughout the journey with their incarcerated loved one. A special guest, Ms. Jamie Gee of the Montgomery County Office of Reentry manager, delivered a thought-provoking presentation.

The third session, held at Mount Carmel UHC, presented the research that made up the Historical Foundations of the doctoral project. The session was graced by Dr. Wanza Jackson-Mitchell, the warden of the Warren Correctional Institute. Her presentation, in step with the history of the prison post-emancipation on the Ohio Department of Corrections, exemplified life “on the yard.” This was very informative and eye-opening.

Week four emphasized the Theological Foundations. The presentation introduced soteriology, the doctrine of salvation, with the theological themes of pastoral and minjung theology. It further introduced theological anthropology, the doctrine of humanity, and its related themes of Black liberation and womanist theology. The session outlined carceral references in the Bible. This session was completed with a presentation by Montgomery County Commissioner Debbie Lieberman. Her presentation was an overview of the development of programs and policies to reform and reduce Ohio’s prison recidivism while looking toward future initiatives.

Week five introduced the Interdisciplinary Foundations. The session examined Cognitive Behavioral Theory as it relates to the criminal justice system, cultural trauma, and mass incarceration in the African American community. The presentation and discussions were based on the theory that people's thinking influences their emotions. The emphasis was on empowering the family to support their incarcerated loved ones. The session was highlighted by Mr. Sterling Titus, a program manager, whose journey from incarceration to returning citizen inspired the group with hope for their incarcerated loved ones.

Week six finalized the doctoral project with a session on the Enneagram. The participants were asked to fill out an assessment prior to the session. The Enneagram is a tool to assist with determining personality types for self-awareness and growth. There are nine personality types. The assessment's idea was to make the participant aware of unhealthy habits and develop healthy interaction and communication habits with their incarcerated loved ones. The remainder of the time was allotted for the participants to complete their journal entries.

Biweekly drawings for gift cards occurred throughout the six-week sessions. Everyone in attendance received a gift card and a complimentary gift by the final session.



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **MINISTRY FOCUS**

#### **Introduction**

I was an honor-roll student all through school because I loved school. I did all my work and completed all my assignments with excellence. I tried to get the highest score on all my tests and went above and beyond on my special projects. I did not expect to be celebrated for my academic accomplishments, and I was not disappointed. I knew I was treated differently, but I did not yet know why. I proved I could excel academically; however, interacting with my fellow students was a daily challenge. My awareness of marginalization occurred late in elementary school. Dealing with it has become a lifelong challenge.

Spiritual maturation leads to the realization that encouragement is not always readily available; you must encourage yourself in the Lord to accomplish the projects and ministry at hand. My context is family oriented where my desire was to reach out to the community. This project involved developing a community collaboration to reach out to families of incarcerated loved ones within the Dayton community. The context leaders worked primarily with families of persons who have or have had sons or daughters incarcerated while helping them figure how they could best support them during their incarceration and when they are released.

## **Context**

My Contextual Analysis at the Mount Carmel United Holy Church in Dayton, Ohio, provided an overview of the context, including historical descriptions, geographic descriptions, demographic descriptions of the congregants and neighborhood, and a review of the present ministry with the current congregational objectives and future congregational initiatives. This study was conducted via observation of the church services, including Bible study and Sunday school. Various aspects of the congregation were revealed during conversations after church or during church events. It was noted that the entire church got involved in the planning and execution of church events.

A brief history of the United Holy Church and the Mount Carmel United Holy Church was explored and presented. The United Holy Church was established in 1886 in Raleigh, North Carolina. The Mount Carmel United Holy Church was organized as a mission in 1959 in Dayton, Ohio, under the supervision of Elder Howard Berger and began with four members including the current pastor of Mt. Carmel United Holy Church.

The geographic description, extracted from the City of Dayton Official Zoning Map (April 19, 2021), gave a clear view of the community surrounding the Mount Carmel United Holy Church. It identifies landmarks, businesses, historic areas, and areas planned for development.

Demographics, discovered through a brief questionnaire given to a sampling of the congregants, revealed a family-oriented church that is inwardly focused. The congregants described themselves as a family church. Many of the congregants are related to one another. Most congregants agreed that there is a need to seek more

community involvement and to offer more community outreach programs. There was consensus that future initiatives had incorporated and sought the participation of the immediate community surrounding the church. Also noted was the problem of mass incarceration in the surrounding community.

Pastor Geraldine Hairston, the current pastor, is the second pastor of the Mount Carmel United Holy Church in Dayton, Ohio. Pastor Hairston is ninety years old and has been a member of Mount Carmel from the beginning when the church was founded in 1959. She was present with Reverend Arthur Barnes, the founder and first pastor, when he came to Dayton, Ohio, to establish Mount Carmel United Holy Church. They both came to Dayton from Berwind, West Virginia, which was a coal mine camp.<sup>1</sup> A coal camp town was built and owned by a coal company. The camp towns, sometimes referred to as coal camps, included schools, churches, stores, theatres, and residential structures.<sup>2</sup> While living in Berwind, West Virginia, she and her husband, along with Reverend Arthur Barnes and his wife, attended the United Holy Church in Berwind, West Virginia. Reverend Howard Berger and his wife Evangelist Annie Mae Berger, from the Mount Ebal United Holy Church in Hamilton, Ohio, traveled to Berwind, West Virginia, to run revivals at the United Holy Church in West Virginia.

Observation and conversation with the members of the Mount Carmel United Holy Church revealed the strengths of the ministry. The strength and major influence of this church is the family atmosphere that is present in every worship service, every celebratory event, and every meeting and discussion — notwithstanding the cooperation

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the Pastor of Mount Carmel United Holy Church, October 18, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Appalachian Coalfields, “Berwind, West Virginia,” <https://coalcampusa.com>.

and deference to leadership in analyzing and solving problems. This spirit of love and devotion emanated from the pastor and the ministerial staff. In a recent survey taken, 100% of congregants agreed with the following statement: “Our congregation feels like one large family.”<sup>3</sup> Interviews with members revealed that the early church was composed of family members. One member conveyed they were all real cousins by birth; however, they are now cousins by marriage and other close relationships. Many members have fond memories that go back to the beginning of the church when Elder Barnes was the pastor. They spoke of the times when Elder Barnes would pick everyone up on Sunday morning in his station wagon, later replaced by a school bus. They were quick to note that everyone went to Sunday school. The members shared fond memories of everyone coming out early to church on Easter Sunday morning and Christmas morning for breakfast and fellowship. Most notably in Mount Carmel United Holy Church is the presence of children — lots of children. Members noted that there were always a lot of children in Mount Carmel.

There is a trend and a challenge at Mount Carmel United Holy Church, as well as a lot of other churches, where the young adults, once they reach age eighteen, do not attend church on a regular basis. It was understood, as observed by old and young congregants, some of the young people go into the world to “find themselves,” and few return to the church. And since the young adults are the ones with the small children, there is also an inconsistent and small number of the small children attending Sunday school and regular church services on a regular basis. The older church members love

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<sup>3</sup> This information is a part of the church’s records and files following a recent survey taken.

coming to church as the presence of the Lord and the word of God give them hope in perilous times.

The pastor is the only remaining congregant of the original church planters and charter members. The pastor is ninety-years old, and thankfully, her memory is very sharp. It is urgent for the church to have written records of its foundational history and landmark events. Also significant is the absence of a local mission and vision statement. These findings should be addressed at the earliest convenience by the church board members and the church leadership. A mission statement will give the church a baseline measurement to gauge its success in reaching its intended goals and purposes. There was also an urgency to get a consensus from the young people in the church of their thoughts and ideas of how the church is or is not addressing the needs and interests of the young people in the church and the community. There is a need to further reach out to the surrounding community. There is a realization by the congregants who described themselves as a family church that community outreach is a priority on a list of future objectives. Since Mt. Carmel is in a community where there is mass incarceration, the focus of the DMin project related to the needs of the context community.

#### *The Area Surrounding Mount Carmel United Holy Church*

The geographic descriptions of the area surrounding Mount Carmel United Holy Church was extracted from the City of Dayton Official Zoning Map<sup>4</sup> and provided a great resource for showing the significance of the area surrounding the church. It showed the

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<sup>4</sup> City of Dayton Official Zoning Map, <https://www.daytonohio.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10707/Apr.1-19-2021-Official-Zoning-Map-Full>.

church is in a suburban residential area. On the same street and within close proximity are the Catholic Social Services building, the Dayton Christian Center, and the Dayton Leadership Academy. The Catholic Social Services organization, the Dayton Christian Center, and the Dayton Leadership Academy are local organizations that Mount Carmel United Holy Church partners with to further assess the geographic area and ministry needs within the community. The Dayton Christian Center and the Dayton Leadership Academy are newly constructed buildings in the community. Within one mile of the church are several areas of significance. There are sixteen (and more areas) that are designated landmark buildings in the vicinity around the church; twelve areas represent parcels of land that are planned for development; and in addition, there is a large area designated for urban renewal. There are seven areas representing historic districts. Mount Carmel United Holy Church is within one mile from downtown Dayton, the Dayton Art Institute, and Sinclair Community College. In the lot adjacent to the church is a large semi-paved area and an even larger grassy area that is owned by the church. These areas are used for community events. In the spring the area is used for a community Easter egg hunt. It is an event hosted by the church that the young and old both take part in. The community is invited to participate. In the fall of 2021, Mount Carmel United Holy Church used this area to host a fall festival. Tables, booths, and games were set up for various community activities. Candy, food, and prizes were donated to give away. A large outdoor movie screen was set up for movies and popcorn. There was a large community turn out for this activity. The success of the event prompted Mount Carmel United Holy Church to make it an annual festival for the church and neighborhood.

Mount Carmel thus has a presence in the community and is looking forward to working with the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.

Demographics described in the area include the elderly, single parents, and those living at and below the poverty level. These represent more opportunities for ministry in the community. Census data from 2019 for zip code 45402 shows the races as follows: 72.8% Black or African American, 23.4% White, 2.5% 2+ races, 0.4% Hispanic, 0.5 % Asian, 0.3% American Indian, and 0.1% Other.<sup>5</sup> One interesting category, the incarcerated, was difficult to count. According to the Prison Policy Initiative, those incarcerated are counted as residents in the county prison where they reside, and not their home county.<sup>6</sup> Even though the prison population is not recorded within the community, members of the community with a family member or loved one in prison are notable. In church on any given Sunday, there are members of the congregation who are related to someone who is incarcerated. In a community gathering, there is a great likelihood that there is someone present who knows of a relative or loved one who is in prison, was in prison, or has just gotten out of prison. This has become the norm in the African American community due to mass incarceration.

The need for community outreach in the context presented an opportunity to partner with other organizations in the surrounding community to develop a support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. There was potential for

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<sup>5</sup> U. S. Postal Service, “United States Zip Codes, ” <https://unitedstateszipcodes.org>.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Wagner and Rose Heyer, “Importing Constituents: Prisoners and Political Clout in Ohio,” Prison Policy Initiative: Prison Gerrymandering Project, July 6, 2004, <https://www.prisonersofthecensus.org/ohio/importing.html>.

partnership and coordination with nearby community agencies. There was also the potential for ministerial alliances with other churches in the local area.

Most of the congregants agree there was an opportunity presented here to develop new initiatives and programs to develop a support group forum for congregants and the community who have or know of someone who is in prison. Opportunities exist for more community events and programs that involve the community of people who live immediately around the church. The congregants do an outstanding job of providing members of Mount Carmel United Holy Church outreach services as required. Because the opportunities exist to provide support services for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated, the church leadership was able to consider providing support service to the community.

Finally, most of the congregants expressed a desire for guidance in discovering their spiritual gifts for service and ministry. The discovery of spiritual gifts can be revealed through individual and corporate prayer. Since most of the congregants were interested in spiritual gifts and voiced a desire for assistance in the discovery thereof, the church leadership and ministerial staff took this opportunity to investigate ways to fulfill this need. This was further accomplished through Bible study, specific training, and conferences, and was addressed by the church leadership as a priority. The Mount Carmel United Holy Church has a foundation built on love and family values. This foundation of love and family values was a baseline requirement for building initiatives for faith-based outreach programs within the community. The congregants viewed themselves as a family church, and this concept worked in favor of getting things done expeditiously, efficiently, and with love while considering the needs and feeling of the entire



congregation. This was a proven technique that worked for Mount Carmel United Holy Church. The family church atmosphere that has the Mount Carmel United Holy Church focused inward also worked in favor of the congregants as they reached outward in family unity and initiated community involvement with the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.

### **Ministry Journey**

My ministry journey began around the age of nine years old. However, I believe I was called and chosen before I was aware of the ministry that was ordained in my life. Although it took many years before I accepted my call to the ministry, I was aware that God was present in my life and destiny. My first ministry assignment was to do the work of a devotional leader. The devotional leaders would open every service with a hymn and a prayer. After the prayer, scripture was read, and the service was open for testimony service. The devotional leader led the service, kept the service moving, and ushered in the Spirit to direct the service of the Lord. They call this portion of the service “praise and worship,” but the assignment of the devotional leader was so much more important. The devotional leader set the tone for the preached word and prepared the hearts of the people for the word of God. When you worship and praise God, your heart is prepared to receive the word of God. When your mind is elevated above your everyday circumstances and your flesh, you can receive the spiritual message that God has for your growth and spiritual insight.

My next ministry assignment after accepting my call was visiting the sick and elderly in hospitals and nursing homes. We went out by twos. We used our experience as

devotional leaders in the hospital and nursing home ministry. We sang hymns and songs, read scripture, and prayed and anointed the patients and their rooms. I enjoyed this ministry. The patients received us with joy. We talked, fellowship, brought toiletries, snacks, or other requested items, and left them with a smile. We learned to limit the time when visiting the sick so as not to tire them out.

I also became involved in prison ministry through Reverend Betty Hampton, the late pastor of Mt. Zion House of Prayer in Sidney, Ohio. She was the director of the prison ministry at the Allen-Oakwood Correctional Institute (ACI) in Lima, Ohio. She faithfully attended the prison ministry on the first Saturday of the month conducting church services and Bible study. The offenders at ACI were very gifted with music. They had outstanding musicians and an outstanding choir. They were blessed by the church services and Bible study, and we were blessed by their musical gifts.

I met my first husband at church. He was just released from prison after serving eighteen years. I was a Pentecostal Christian who believed in the impossible. Still, I sought wise counsel and was given the blessing to get married. I had two sons within the first two years of our marriage. Then things began to get difficult. He had difficulty finding a permanent job, and when he did find work, he was unwilling to fully contribute to the household. I was not aware of the trauma that came with eighteen years of incarceration. I was too embarrassed to share the difficulties in my marriage because I did not want to hear anyone say, "I told you so." So, I suffered my trauma in silence until the marriage ultimately ended in separation in the third year, and divorce in the fourth year.

I put everything into ministry without initially realizing that I needed time to recuperate, time to refresh myself, and time to care for my family. I did not realize how

my body, mind, and spirit were affected by attending church services daily while working a full-time job daily and being a single parent until I joined another church. We had service two to three times a week, and I loved the slower pace. Every Sunday, we had dinner and fellowship. This church, at this time in my life, provided supernatural healing and restoration. I was part of a family of believers, and I was connected. Everything at this church was great.

We often looked at the turmoil in a negative way. However, I had come to believe that if God does not stir up controversy in our lives, we will become complacent and want to stay in one place forever. Sometimes the Lord wants us to move to another assignment. But when things are great, we want to stay.

During this time, I traveled extensively as a part of my job. Also, during this time, my baby brother became involved in drug usage and became incarcerated in the state of Wisconsin. I had a travel assignment on my job to go to Battle Creek, Michigan. Since I drove, I was able to take my children with me. After I finished my job assignment, we drove to Wisconsin to visit my brother in prison. He was terribly abused there. He developed diabetes, had to have some toes amputated, suffered a heart attack, and probably many other untold traumas. When he got out of prison, I asked him to come live with me in Ohio. He agreed. I sincerely thought that if I could pray for him and get him to attend church, it would help him in his transition as a returning citizen. I tried to help him find employment, but he was only interested in going out late at night and getting high. I struggled to have him live in my home. I had two young sons still at home, and I knew his behavior was not a good influence on them. My primary struggle was not knowing how to help him, and not having the support or resources that was needed for

the trauma of his imprisonment experience. All I knew was prayer. Prayer is always appropriate, but he needed so much more. I woke up one morning and I thought it was unusual for him to be gone so early. I waited and when it became evening and I had not heard from him, I became concerned. I went upstairs to look in his room and noticed all his things were gone. He had left without saying goodbye.

### **A New Experience**

I was asked to help start a new church in the city of Dayton. It began as a four-night tent revival. Our children were the musicians for the most part. My next to the youngest played the drums, and the youngest son played the keyboard and guitar. They sounded horrible when they first began, but they eventually matured into experienced, young musicians. Our young girls formed a praise dance team. They matured beautifully, and still dance today. It had always been my desire to teach Sunday school. I became the adult Sunday school teacher. I began to teach Bible study. We chose different studies and purchased books to do the studies.

It became apparent there was a need for a women's ministry. Many church members were single women with children. I focused many of our Bible studies on them. I became president of the Women's Day program for the church body and tailored the Women's Day services and programs to the needs of the women in the local church and the church body. I also chartered a program for the junior and senior high school youth in the church body. It was entitled Virtue and Valor. This program was designed to teach the young men to be men of valor and to teach the young women to be of a virtuous character. They had an essay contest and a Virtue and Valor Ball where they wore formal

dress and had a formal dinner. We created a souvenir booklet. The proceeds from the ads were used for \$500 book scholarships for graduating seniors.

In my quest for a deeper relationship with the Lord, I sought to broaden my knowledge of the Word. I heard a program on WDAO radio station entitled “Sound Words.” They announced the address, day, and time of study, so I went to observe the classes offered. The Sound Words Ministry, a Christian education organization, exceeded my expectations. It was an oasis for anyone thirsting for words of knowledge. The founder/instructor was a Bible-teaching virtuoso named Jannie Wilcoxson. It was her mission and privilege to instruct all partakers of the Sound Words Ministry in the art of understanding and skillful handling of the word of God. The opportunities for study ranged from Genesis to Revelation and the foundation of the ministry rested on 2 Timothy 1:13. She taught a series of workshops from 2010 through 2014 called the Teacher’s Meeting Workshop Series where she taught participants how to study the Bible and practice and teach God’s word. The Christian education I received from Sound Words Ministry enhanced my Sunday school teaching and my Bible study classes. In addition to Christian education, Sound Words Ministry, in collaboration with other local ministries and a local wellness center, hosted an annual juice fasting and praying event during the month of February. This annual fasting event instilled the true meaning and techniques of fasting that I still use today.

Skills that I learned on my job as a business analyst, marketing specialist, and computer specialist were also transferable to the ministry. These skills included research, analytics, process improvement, internal audit, risk, and remediation. These same skills were instrumental in developing an agenda for the Women’s Day program where I served

as president. These skills were also essential to developing and implementing the Virtue and Valor program for the youth as well as teaching Sunday school for the youth, and as well as adult Sunday school and Bible study. The same skills are instrumental for the doctoral project.

I stayed in the previous ministry for nineteen years. I wrestled with leaving after ten years or so. There was never a right time as I did not want to leave the ministry during tumultuous times. Time passed and complacency set in. I weighed the cost of staying. I did not have an exit plan, but the restlessness in my soul remained. I was in a place where women in ministry were more than accepted. I had opportunities where I preached, taught, created, and executed programs and services. I was appointed to the position of youth pastor and then to assistant pastor; however, I decided not to accept the position of pastor. I was still wrestling with the desire to leave the ministry. When I became the assistant pastor, it became more difficult to just leave, but I knew it had to happen. I had stayed too long.

I finally left my church where I had served for nineteen years. I went to the pastor of the church that I had known forever to ask to be under watch care. I was broken, but I knew I dared not go home. I had to continue the work of ministry. She welcomed me and immediately put me to work instructing the young people. I noticed they did not have an adult Bible study class, so I asked the pastor if I could teach a class or two. I began teaching Bible study weekly. A year later I attended the convocation, and I went before the presbytery board to petition for a transfer of license, and I was licensed as an elder. On October 1, 2021, I received my Credentials of Ordination in the mail for the office of an elder. At the end of August, my pastor celebrated her ninetieth birthday. The church

had a wonderful celebration. The pastor is healthy physically and mentally. She is anointed and Spirit lead. My great aunt lived to be 105. I look for the same longevity in our pastor.

In July 2021, I began the process of admissions at United Theological Seminary. In August 2021, with the help and expertise of the United Theological Seminary admissions office, I was accepted and attended my first intensive. In September 2021, I was offered my dream job of being a chaplain at the Children's Medical Center. However, I turned it down because I was still working full time on my current job, and just starting the Doctor of Ministry program at United Theological Seminary. In addition to teaching Bible study at my church, I was teaching a class at a church I previously attended. When my church had a meeting to elect officers for all the local church organizations, I did not volunteer for any new position. However, I did announce that I had been accepted in the Doctor of Ministry program at United Theological Seminary and would not be able to hold an office at this time. I let them know I would participate in the organizations and programs as time allows.

I thought I was too old to start over again; however, God began to orchestrate things in my life. As I was elevated to the position of an elder and accepted in the Doctor of Ministry program at United Theological Seminary, I was encouraged to know the Lord has all my needs and desires in his hands and is able to call forth His will for my life at His appointed time. I already had the concept for my doctoral project. It involved the support for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.

### Develop the Synergy

It was not until one of my sons was incarcerated that I began to realize the depth of despair in trying to navigate the criminal justice system. Even though my brother had been incarcerated, I did not realize the depth of the emotional, spiritual, and financial impact on the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. The reason, I suppose, that I was not fully aware is because having an incarcerated loved one is not something the family and loved ones readily discuss publicly. There are neither resources nor support groups where you can openly and confidentially discuss the trauma you are experiencing. Some experiences are too painful to relive; however, I believe the Lord brings them to the forefront at the appropriate time so that ministries can be birthed.

According to my contextual analysis, my context is deeply family-oriented and resides in an area that census data shows is 72.8% Black or African American.<sup>7</sup> The book titled *Public Health and Social Justice* states the following:

The incarceration rate for African Americans is 1,815/100,000, compared with 609/100,000 for Latino Americans, 235/100,000 for Caucasian Americans, and 99/100,000 for Asian Americans. From arrest to sentencing, racism pervades the US criminal justice system. A person of color is more likely than a white person to be stopped by the police, to be abused by the police during that stop, to be arrested, to be denied bail, to be charged with a serious crime, to be convicted, and to receive a harsher sentence. African American youth are six times more likely than whites to be both sentenced and incarcerated, nine times more likely if charged with a violent crime. . . . Minority youths are significantly more likely to be sent to adult courts than their white counterparts. In 2002, there were more black men behind bars than in college or university.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> United States Zip Codes, "Black or African American by Race," <https://unitedstateszipcodes.org>.

<sup>8</sup> Martin Donohoe, "Incarceration Nation: Health and Welfare in the Prison System in the United States," in *Public Health and Social Justice*, A Jossey-Bass Reader, 1st edition, ed. Martin Donohoe (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass/John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 195.



In the same book, Jonathan Kozol is quoted:

More money is put into prison construction than into schools. That, in itself, is the description of a nation bent on suicide. I mean, what's more precious to us than our children? We're going to build a lot more prisons if we don't deal with the schools and their inequalities.<sup>9</sup>

My entire ministry has been in the African American community. Most areas have been to the underprivileged and disenfranchised. I have always emphasized education as a vehicle to overcome poverty. For the young people that are not keen on higher education, I have always recommended that they consider the military services as an option or taking up a trade or skill as another option. I enjoyed prison ministry while I was involved in it, but I did not foresee it as my expected end. The Lord can take all your experiences and create a new concept that you are not aware is unfolding.

There is a significant number of African Americans that are incarcerated and there is an urgency to provide support for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated within our community. I proposed the development of a collaboration for supporting the loved ones of the many African Americans that are incarcerated. In a book titled *Doing Time on the Outside*, the following is observed:

The collateral effects of incarceration on families and communities are . . . not only material but deeply social . . . Perhaps the most unexpected finding is the stigma related to incarceration is visited on the families of the prisoners as much as – if not more than – it is on the prisoners themselves. Rather than simply deterring potential offenders from future crimes, the most significant impact of the stigma related to increased incarceration has been the silencing and isolation of families of prisoners, an effect that few legal analysts anticipate.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Martin Donohoe, "Incarceration Nation: Health and Welfare in the Prison System in the United States," in *Public Health and Social Justice*, A Jossey-Bass Reader, 1st edition, ed. Martin Donohoe (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass/John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 195.

<sup>10</sup> Donald Braman, *Doing Time on the Outside: Incarceration and Family Life in Urban America* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2009), 165-167.

The context, in its effort to develop programs for community outreach, collaborated with community agencies for the Doctor of Ministry project by providing a forum and refuge for families and loved ones of the incarcerated to receive prayer, encouragement, and identifying resources to navigate through the trauma of having a loved one in the prison system. Through research and program development, this Doctor of Ministry project facilitated a support group program for the participants to identify issues and requirements for a support group forum. This project provided relief for the families and loved ones of the incarcerated where they openly grieved and found comfort and prayer, along with the necessary resources, direction, and encouragement for the journey of walking with their loved ones through the process of their imprisonment and ultimate release.

### **Conclusion**

The general nature and content of this project collaborated with the context and other community organizations and provided advocacy for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. The mass incarceration of African American men is an assault on the stability of the African American community, particularly African American women. It is often the mothers, wives, and significant others who provide support for the incarcerated loved ones. This support includes emotional support as well as physical support in the act of visiting the incarcerated loved ones which often involves hours of travel to the penal institution. In addition, the support provided by these women included material and financial support that included keeping money “on the books” of the incarcerated loved ones for commissary and phone calls.

Studies suggest that although serving time in prison may be the valid consequences for crimes committed, the impact that incarceration has on children, families, and communities are grossly overlooked (Swisher, 2012).<sup>11</sup>

The family and loved ones of the incarcerated in the African American community feel marginalized because they internalize their situation and often blame themselves for the incarceration of their loved ones. They often ask themselves what they did to contribute to the situation and how they could have prevented the incarceration of the loved one.

The mass incarceration of African American men not only adversely affects African American women, but it also affects African American children by creating another generation of fatherless sons and daughters and the traumatic cycle continues.

Although African Americans compose only about 12 percent of the population, they make up about 50 percent of the prison population (US Census Bureau, 2006). Imprisonment of African American men causes challenges for the men subjected to long prison terms and has an adverse effect on their family and community. Incarceration impacts millions each year by disrupting family support, networks, and parent child relationships (Travis, & Waul, 2004).<sup>12</sup>

The proposed support group provided a forum of relief for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated by guiding them, upholding them, and instilling hope in their situation; then the incarcerated can achieve dignity and redemption in their incarceration and the resolve to complete their sentence. This Doctor of Ministry project, involving the context, in collaboration with community organizations, working with and for the family

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<sup>11</sup> Rasheeda Imani Jones, "The Effects of Incarceration Terms on the Well-Being of African American Families," Dissertation, Clarke Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Rasheeda Imani Jones, "The Effects of Incarceration Terms on the Well-Being of African American Families," Dissertation, Clarke Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia, 2016.

and loved ones of the incarcerated, sought to empower the families and loved ones of the incarcerated to be the light for their incarcerated loved ones to find their way home.

The desired outcome of this Doctor of Ministry project was to identify the families and loved ones of those incarcerated in the Mount Carmel United Holy Church and the surrounding community. As we identified them, we sought to draw them to the love of Christ and provided a refuge for them. We prayed that our light would shine so that we could be an example for them to be the light for their incarcerated loved ones guiding them, encouraging them, and leading them home.

In conclusion, a general plan of implementation for the Doctor of Ministry project was created. It began with a survey of the context community to identify the incarcerated loved ones to embrace. The plan of implementation included an overview of what the family and loved ones of the incarcerated needed to know about the intake process of our loved ones as they are incarcerated and processed into the prison system. The plan provided guidance, encouragement, and assistance to the family of inmates while walking beside them through the process. The process would begin as soon as the court date by being there to accompany the family to the court room, find out when and where they will be doing their time, and find out the rules and regulations for communicating and visiting with the incarcerated. The plan included support and resources for family and loved ones when the returning citizen's sentence has been fulfilled and they seek family reunification. The Doctor of Ministry project concluded with participants looking forward to the reunification of the returning citizen with their family and loved ones who will have knowledge of resources for their transition back into the family and community life.

Following this Ministry Focus are the four foundation chapters – Biblical, Historical, Theological, and Interdisciplinary – previously mentioned in the Introduction and the closing chapter, Project Analysis, which gives an overview of the project itself, the resources taught during the six-week period, and the data collection and analysis.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS**

#### **Introduction**

This doctoral project proposes that the context leaders of the Mount Carmel United Holy Church, in partnership with community agencies, develop a support group forum for the families and loved ones of the incarcerated. The U.S. incarceration rate increased dramatically between 1970 and 2000, growing by about 400 percent. The result has been the persistent and disproportionate impact on people of color, immigrants, Native Americans, refugees, people experiencing poverty, and others.<sup>1</sup> Imprisonment in the African American community, which can be described as mass incarceration, has a particularly negative impact on the African American family as it impedes family support, especially parent-child relationships. This project purports to shed light on the plight of the family and loved ones of the incarcerated who are discomfited and often looked upon with disdain by society at large. The trauma they experience, especially the children, is not addressed, not administered to, and resources are not readily available. The Biblical Foundations chapter for this doctoral project can be found in Luke 4:14-21.

And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. And He began teaching in their synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it

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<sup>1</sup> Vera Institute of Justice, *Causes of Mass Incarceration*, <https://www.vera.org/ending-mass-incarceration/causes-of-mass-incarceration>.

was written, ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor, He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.’ And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing’ (NASB).

The primary text that is explored is Luke 4:18-19:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor, He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord’ (NASB).

The fourth chapter of the gospel of Luke begins with Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, being led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Jesus fasted for forty days, and afterward, He was hungry. At this inopportune time, the devil comes to tempt Him with three propositions. Jesus responds to each proposition with the Word of God, beginning with the phrase “it is written.” After the temptation, Jesus returns to Galilee in the power of the Spirit strengthened and prepared for ministry and spiritual warfare. The news of Jesus’ earthly ministry spreads throughout the region. Jesus returns to His hometown, Nazareth, and enters the synagogue on the Sabbath. Jesus is handed the book of the prophet Isaiah; He opens the book and reads the Bible passage from the sixty-first chapter.

This Biblical Foundations chapter will flow into the literary setting following the introduction. The literary setting will include the literary and rhetorical context. The literary and rhetorical context will examine the text, the biblical book and the surrounding chapters and relatable literature, and the influence on the reader. The Canonical context will briefly examine the place of the biblical passage within the Bible as a whole. The literary setting consists of the form, structure, and movement of the biblical text and will

identify the literary form or literary genre of the biblical text. The structure and movement of the text will be discoverable from the beginning to the end. The movement of the text reveals the emotional and spiritual dimension of the text.

The historical setting follows the literary setting. The historical setting will examine the events, places, customs, and historical background of the community surrounding the Book of Luke, its author, and readers.

The cultural and social setting of the Book of Luke will be examined. The cultural and social setting section will look at the sociopolitical and cultural context. The major themes of the text will be formulated through an understanding and interpretation of the Biblical passage. The above analyses will be viewed and merged to formulate and develop a cohesive understanding of the Biblical passage.

The word study will define and analyze the key words in the Biblical passage in order to give a detailed explanation of the pericope. The word study will observe the pericope or key words, terms, and ideas. It will observe the tone and character of the text in the pericope, Biblical passage, and how the pericope relates to the Biblical passage as a whole.

The conclusion and summary will give an overview of the Biblical passage and how the pericope relates to the doctoral project. The conclusion to this Biblical passage culminates in Jesus's response to the wilderness temptation as He overcomes the devil's tactics through His power and wisdom even at His weakest moment. Jesus returns to Galilee in the power of the spirit and began teaching in the synagogues. As Jesus embarked on His mission, as identified in the pericope and continues in the power of the Spirit, He is embodying the example for the doctoral project and for all who accept their



ministry, purpose, and calling. Jesus proceeds through the Power of the Holy Spirit in every work given by the Father. Any project, vocation, or ministry assigned to the people of God should begin by seeking the direction of the Holy Spirit.

The contextual leaders will approach the doctoral project with prayer as they seek to use their spiritual gifts for outreach to the families and loved ones of the incarcerated community. This project seeks to learn the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of the family and loved ones of the offender to serve them in the capacity of a support group forum.

### **Literary Setting**

The analysis of the literary setting depicts the literary context leading up to the Biblical passage and pericope of this study. The literary form of the Book of Luke is in the form of the gospel writers. It is a narrative of the birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and second coming of Jesus Christ containing genealogies, parables, natural miracles, miracles of healing, discourses, and the passion of Christ.

That Luke knew and used still other materials, both oral and written, in composing this Gospel is certain, if not demonstrable. In fact, Luke shares a body of material (probably written in form) with the author of the Gospel According to Matthew that accounts for approximately one-fifth of the overall Gospel story. Scholars designate this common material as 'Q' (German 'Quelle,' 'source'). Whether Luke had further written sources for his unique recital of Jesus' birth, childhood, certain parables, and the materials peculiar to Luke's account of Jesus' passion and resurrection is debated and at present beyond final determination. Yet, Luke's concern with sources – with acknowledging and using them profitably – is clear from his prologue to the Gospel (Luke 1:1-4).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Marion L. Soards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible, New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, ed. Michael D. Coogan (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001), 94.

The following outline of the book of Luke shows the structure of the Biblical passage and movement of the events of Jesus' ministry journey from His birth to the cross to the ascension to the throne in heaven, to the proof of His resurrection, and to the great commission. Luke, a Christian Gentile, and the designated human author of the Gospel of Luke, states his undertaking of the narrative of the events are written through careful study, documentation, and eyewitness accounts.

The introduction in the outline of the Gospel of Luke observes that Luke is careful to relay to the audience that the compilation of the works to follow have been thoroughly vetted/investigated and confirmed as designated in the first four verses.

Section one of the outlines, Luke 1:1-4:13, includes the introduction and reveals the events surrounding the birth of Christ. An angel announced the birth of John the Baptist to Zacharias, whose wife is Elizabeth, as he ministers in the temple. Because of his unbelief, his voice is taken from him. When John the Baptist is born, Zacharias' voice is restored, and he prophesies of John's ministry. The angel Gabriel announces the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus the Christ to the virgin Mary. The angel announces the great tidings of the Savior's birth to the shepherds, and the shepherds went with haste to Bethlehem to see the Christ child lying in a manger. Later, we hear Simeon's prophecy and Anna's testimony. Jesus grows in wisdom. John the Baptist's ministry grows. Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist and immediately is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to fast forty days. After forty days of fasting and being tempted of the devil, Jesus who is the Word, used the Word to disarm the devil of his devices. The devil leaves Him for a season.

Section two, Luke 4:14-9:50, includes the Biblical passage found in Luke 4:14-21 and the pericope found in Luke 4:18-19; it presents the beginning of Jesus' ministry. After forty days of fasting and praying and being tempted in the wilderness, and triumphing over the temptation of the devil, Jesus' authority and power over the devil is manifested. He returns to Galilee in the power of the Spirit! Everything He says is anointed and everything he does is anointed, and His fame is spread throughout all the region He is traveling in, and He is being glorified in all the synagogues — that is until He travels to His hometown. In His hometown of Nazareth, Jesus is presented with scroll of Isaiah to read. The Biblical passage read was originally from Isaiah 61:1-2; however, there is a variation in the delivery of this Biblical passage read by Jesus from the original Isaiah 61:1-2:

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners; to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord. (NASB).

The Old Testament passage, Isaiah 61:1-2, was written for the people of God in exile. They are described as poor, brokenhearted, captives, and prisoners. The Spirit of the Lord is upon the prophet as he is empowered to release and restore the people of God. The Lord endows the prophet with the Holy Spirit because He has compassion on His people. In the New Testament passage, Luke 4:18-19, Jesus is sent by God and proceeds through the power and authority of the Holy Spirit to fulfill His mission to reconcile humanity back to the Father.

Mary J. Obiorah and Favour C. Uroko, in their article “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me (Is 61:1): The use of Isaiah 61:1-2 in Luke 4:18-19,” identify the person of Jesus as the fulfillment of ancient prophecy. In this gospel, it was Jesus himself who

unrolled the scroll, and read Isaiah 61:1-2. The words are intentionally modified and cited in Luke 4:21 stating that He is the fulfillment of the prophecy recorded in the text he read.<sup>3</sup> The canonical context of the Biblical passage places it in harmony with Isaiah 61:1-2a. Jesus states in Luke 4:18-19 that He is the fulfillment of the scripture stated in Isaiah 61:1-2a. The relationship between these two texts is seen in Jesus's inaugural sermon for his ministry.

After Jesus reads the scroll of Isaiah, he sits down, and with all eyes on Him, He begins His discourse.<sup>4</sup> Many marveled at the words He spoke, but some began to question in disbelief, "Is this not Joseph's son?"<sup>5</sup> This statement of disbelief among the people of Nazareth, Jesus's hometown, and Jesus's subsequent statement about Gentiles receiving the blessing, lead to Jesus' rejection in Nazareth. Rejection does not deter Christ. Jesus continues in power and demonstration throughout the region of Galilee. Demons are cast out, the sick are healed, the leper is cleansed, and the lame are made to walk. Jesus calls and selects His disciples teaching them and expanding his ministry. The Book of Luke shows Jesus's compassion for the marginalized in society and for women in ministry. The storm is stilled, a woman is healed, the twelve are sent to preach, five thousand are fed, and Jesus Christ's greatness is noised abroad. Jesus ministered to the marginalized and the demoralized is evident in Luke's gospel. Jesus provides an example that implores the church to reach out to the family and loved ones of the incarcerated who are outcasts, who may feel invisible, disengaged, and ignored by friends, family, and the community.

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<sup>3</sup> Mary J. Obiorah and Favour C. Uroko. "'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me' (Is 61:1): The use of Isaiah 61:1-2 in Luke 4:18-19," *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 74, no. 1 (2018): 1.

<sup>4</sup> Luke 4:21, NASB.

<sup>5</sup> Luke 4:22, NASB.

In the journal article, “The Gospel of Luke: A Framework for a Theology of Disability,” the author states that suffering can be disabling, and not a single one of us can avoid it. The author states that a disability is anything that puts one at a disadvantage as they go through the emotional and psychological stages of shock, denial, anger, grief, and at some point, if a support system is evident, acceptance and peace.<sup>6</sup> I am going to take the liberty to exchange the word “disability” with “incarceration” and “families and loved ones of the incarcerated” from this same article in the following paragraph because it is appropriate and directly relates to the doctoral project:

Incarceration not only affects the individual, but it impacts the entire family as well. The family can feel overburdened and overwhelmed, oftentimes because they have been isolated and abandoned by their friends and extended family members. These tragic events taken together raise the question concerning the church’s obligation to the family and loved one of the incarcerated.<sup>7</sup>

This is relevant to the doctoral project because the gospel of Luke focuses on the marginalized and disenfranchised, which includes the families and loved ones of the incarcerated as the disabled and vulnerable.

Section three, Luke 9:51-19:27, outlines Jesus on His way to Jerusalem and the growing rejection and opposition to Christ. Samaria rejects Jesus. Seventy disciples are sent out and seventy return proclaiming, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.”<sup>8</sup> The Lord’s Prayer is in this section. Christ is rejected by religious leaders and the religious leaders are rejected by Christ. Yet Christ is still healing; He heals the demoniac; He heals the crippled woman; and He heals blind Bartimaeus. There are woes

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<sup>6</sup> Kathy McReynolds, “THE GOSPEL OF LUKE: A FRAMEWORK FOR A THEOLOGY OF DISABILITY,” *Christian Education Journal* 13, no. 1 (Spring, 2016): 169.

<sup>7</sup> McReynolds, “THE GOSPEL OF LUKE,” 171.

<sup>8</sup> Luke 10:17, CSB.

and warnings. Christ warns about hypocrisy, covetousness, about the cost of discipleship, about not discerning the times, and about the second coming. Christ is yet teaching; He teaches in parables of the mustard seed, of the great supper, of the savorless salt, of the lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost son, and the unjust judge to name a few. Jesus blesses the children. And Jesus foretells of his death and resurrection.

Finally, section four, Luke 19:28-23:56, outlines the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It walks us through the last week in the life of Christ, including the triumphal entry, the Olivet discourse, Passover and arrest, trials and crucifixion, burial and resurrection, and the authentication and ascension.

In addition to the outline of Luke, important literary information is discovered in the synopsis of the four Gospels. Of the four gospels, the Book of Luke is the only book written by a non-Jew; Luke is Gentile Christian. In the synoptic gospels, Luke (4:14) is the only one of the gospels to state Jesus returned to Galilee “in the power of the Spirit.” The other three gospels simply stated that Jesus came into Galilee. Dominic Legge states, “Christ can never be without his Spirit. What is more, Christ as a man relies on – indeed, cannot do without – the Holy Spirit in accomplishing the work given to him by the Father.”<sup>9</sup>

### **Historical Setting**

The Biblical passage, Luke 4:14-21, comes from the book of Luke which is one of the four gospels. Scholars have credited the authorship of the Book of Luke to Luke, the beloved physician. Luke does not identify himself as a Jew and therefore is believed to be

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<sup>9</sup> Dominic Legge, *Trinitarian Christology of St Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017), 132.

a God-fearing Gentile and a traveling companion of the apostle Paul. He addressed the Book of Luke to the most excellent Theophilus; the Greek interpretation means “friend of God, or one who loves God.” Theophilus may also have been a Roman administrative official, and who also may have been a literary sponsor of the Book of Luke. Theophilus may have been very knowledgeable about the Christian faith and may have been a Christian. Also, Theophilus literally translates to “lover of God,” so the Book of Luke may have been simply dedicated to his fellow believers. The stylized and formal introduction of the Book of Luke leads scholars to believe it was written for a Greco-Roman audience in addition to be written for all readers who want to know the truth about Jesus Christ. The format in which the Book of Luke was written is also an indication that the author was very knowledgeable about writing history documentation.

Luke’s gospel was written at the time of Roman occupation. The people were oppressed. They were looking for someone who could deliver them from the rule of Roman government. J. Massyngbaerde Ford states the following:

One of the most turbulent and belligerent centuries of Jewish history was the one into which Jesus of Nazareth was born and in which the early church expanded. It has been called the ‘seething cauldron’ of first century Judaism. The climax of numerous and diverse revolts came with the outbreak of the memorable war with the Romans in 66 C.E. and ceased for some sixty years after the mass suicide at Masada in 74 C.E. – that is, until the second rebellion against the Romans, instigated by the Jewish leader Bar Kochba (132-35 C.E.). It is important to realize that the Gospels – indeed, the whole of the New Testament – were written against this background of unrest, an unrest that had repercussions in some countries beyond the Palestine where Jews reside.<sup>10</sup>

Verse 17 of the Biblical passage states that Jesus was given the scroll of the prophet Isaiah to read. The pericope originates from the Biblical passage from Isaiah

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<sup>10</sup> J. Massyngbaerde Ford, *My Enemy is My Guest* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985), 1.

61:1-2. Isaiah was also written at a time of political and civil unrest. This passage of Isaiah is found in what is identified as Trito-Isaiah or Third Isaiah (chapters 55-66).

During this time, the Assyrians invaded causing the collapse and exile of Israel's northern kingdom. The prophet Isaiah preached to Judah in hopes that Judah would repent of her sins and avoid Babylonian invasion and captivity.

It is believed that the Gospel of Mark was written first, and that Matthew and Luke make use of Mark's Gospel when they wrote the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.

Luke would have been written after Mark, which probably dates to the AD 50s. But Luke would also have been written prior to Acts. Acts, which refers to the Gospel of Luke as 'the first narrative' (Acts 1:1), was apparently written prior to Paul's release from prison in Rome (see Act 28:16-31). After his release around AD 60, Paul continued his missionary work and was later imprisoned again and martyred about AD 66/67. So, if Acts was completed around AD 60, then Luke would've been written in the late 50s.<sup>11</sup>

Because the Book of Luke and the Book of Acts are purported to have the same author, most commentaries review both books together. Luke was a traveling companion of Paul, and though he was not an apostle, it is supposed that his apostolic writings were influenced by this relationship.,

Dahl has summarized the thinking of many interpreters today, in insisting that Luke was not only influenced by Hellenistic historiography, but was 'himself a minor Hellenistic historian, albeit one who dealt with a very special subject matter and who imitated biblical rather than Attic style' (Purpose of Luke-Acts, 88). In other words, as Barrett has put it, 'Luke's vocation as a historian did not arise out of idle curiosity but was (humanly speaking) forced upon him by the theological and ecclesiastical environment in which he lived' (*Luke the Historian*, 51). Since Luke's is a form of historical writing laced with a concern for religious guarantee, proclamation, and didactic, it may well fit into categories of ancient literary writing but fail to live up to the standards of modern historiography.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Tony Evans, *Tony Evans Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2019), 956.

<sup>12</sup> Joseph A Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, in *Anchor Bible Commentary*, vol. 28, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York, NY: Double Day Religious Publishing Group, 1982), 15.



Luke's purpose in recounting the story of Jesus and its sequel is not simply, or even primarily, that of an ancient Hellenistic historian. Herein lies the real difference between Luke the evangelist and both ancient and modern historians. For his historical concern serves a theological end; he sees the 'events' that he is to narrate as the fulfillment (Luke 1:1) and this reveals his historical concern as subordinate to a theological one.

In discussing the historical value of the Lucan Gospel, we can compare Luke's version of many of the episodes with their Synoptic counterparts in Matthew or Mark. It is often not difficult to decide which forms of a given episode represents the more primitive tradition of an incident or saying. But step back from the more primitive tradition to the event or saying itself is another matter. A verdict about the authenticity of a saying of Jesus presented in the Lucan Gospel would entail an investigation that goes far beyond the concerns of a commentator on this text. Moreover, in composing his Gospel, Luke has clearly made use of earlier traditions and even written sources. His dependence on Mark and 'Q' means that for such material the historical value of what he recounts as the words and deed of Jesus may be as good as that of his sources, though perhaps colored by his own redaction.<sup>13</sup>

In *The Anchor Bible*, Irenaeus is quoted as saying, "That this Luke was inseparable from Paul and was his collaborator in (preaching) the gospel, he himself makes clear, not by boasting (of it), but led on by the truth itself . . . In this way he [Paul, after 2 Tim 4:10-11 has been quoted] shows that Luke was always associated with him and inseparable from him."<sup>14</sup>

Luke may have been a Hellenistic Jew, a Gentile, a Greek physician, a Roman citizen. Tradition associates Luke with Antioch. In Luke's genealogy, he does not stop at David or Abraham, but his genealogy goes all the way back to Adam in an effort to include the whole human race. Luke's gospel does not promote the Book of the Law, circumcision, or those things peculiar to the Jews. He highlights Jesus as healer, deliverer, and Savior of the world.

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<sup>13</sup> Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 16

<sup>14</sup> Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX*, 38.

### **Cultural and Social Setting**

The cultural and social setting in Luke's gospel is notably different from the other three gospels. Luke being a Gentile Christian directs his gospel to the Gentiles or non-Jews, and most notably to the outcasts of society, the marginalized and those of low social status.

In the birth narrative Jesus is born in a manger, surrounded by animals, visited by shepherds who had been visited by angels and instructed to make haste to see the Christ child. Absent from the manger scene are the kings and their gifts. Also absent in Luke's gospel is the threat of King Herod as written in Matthew's gospel.

In the second chapter of Luke's gospel, he reveals the cultural and social setting as follows:

Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. Luke 2:1-2 (NASB).

Luke's gospel also speaks of the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist and further reveals the social-political atmosphere in Luke 3:1-3:

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. (NASB)

John the Baptist is known as the forerunner of Jesus Christ. His call and ministry to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus Christ is indicated in Luke 3:4-6:

As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,  
The voice of one crying in the wilderness,  
Make ready the way of the Lord,

Make His paths straight.  
 Every ravine will be filled,  
 And every mountain and hill will be brought low;  
 The crooked will become straight,  
 And the rough roads smooth;  
 And all flesh will see the salvation of God.

John is not only there to baptize; he is preaching the prerequisite for baptism.

John is preaching repentance and forgiveness of sins. He is also teaching new standards of living in preparation for the coming of Christ.

The crowds who come for baptism are to ‘bear fruits worthy of repentance’ and specific teaching is given to a number of particular groups. Seemingly rather haphazard in their selection, they nevertheless reflect important ethical requirements of groups of people who were particularly open to exploiting their fellow human beings. Those well provided for are to share their resources, tax-collectors are not to abuse their legitimate authority, soldiers are not to exploit their powers. Contentment with their wages means that the land in which they serve will not be further denuded of its produce for their benefit. John is here made to share that strong social concern which is so evident in Luke’s gospel.<sup>15</sup>

The people received John’s message and repented. As he preached ‘Make ready the way of the Lord,’ the people lived in expectation and wanted to make their hearts ready to receive the Christ. Some asked if John was the Christ. John answered as follows:

As for me, I baptize you with water, but one is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire (Luke 3:16, NASB).

When Jesus comes on the scene, the people are looking for a Savior. When Jesus gets baptized, He identifies Himself with the baptized believers and knows they will be drawn to Him in the days ahead. John the Baptist knows he must decrease, as Jesus’ ministry begins to increase. After Jesus is baptized, He is immediately led by the Spirit of

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<sup>15</sup> Erik Franklin, *Luke: Commentary*, in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, ed. John Barton and John Muddiman (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 922-960.

the Lord into the wilderness to fast forty days. He is tempted by the devil and prevails over the devil's temptation through the Word of God.

Jesus returned to Galilee victorious and in the power of the Spirit.

Jesus, led by the Spirit, spent forty days in the desert praying and fasting before beginning his mission. The Messianic temptation took place right after the baptism account. In Luke, it played a significant role as the final preparatory event that introduced the ministry of the Messiah to the public.<sup>16</sup> This preparation was necessary for him to fulfill the work that the Father gave him to do. These passages (Lk. 4:1-14) imply that prayer is an important element in mission preparation. The temptation in this account stands in contrast to the temptation in Genesis 3. The fall of humanity was through the first Adam who yielded to the temptation of Satan. The last Adam, the Messiah, resisted the temptation of Satan and gave complete obedience to God. After overcoming all the temptations, 'Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit' (4:14).<sup>17</sup>

Jesus has prevailed over the enemy and was empowered to fulfil His mission to preach the Kingdom of God. Luke's gospel states His mission in the pericope found in Luke 4:18-19. Luke's gospel emphasizes that the gospel is for all people, and especially for the disenfranchised people of society. Luke's gospel aims to reach those who heretofore have seemingly been excluded from the blessings and benefits of the Kingdom only to have those who were readily accepted to take offense. Luke's gospel proclaims repentance and forgiveness for all people — sorrowfully, all will not repent and accept God's universal grace.

Luke's concern to present the radical inclusiveness of Jesus' ministry is evident in the numerous scenes in this Gospel in which Jesus reaches out to sinners, Samaritans, tax collectors, women, and outcasts. Both social and religious factors conditioned the prevailing attitude to the privileged toward these groups. A vital part of Jesus' proclamation of the new order of the kingdom of God, therefore, consisted in his challenge to the collusion of the religious authorities in the social prejudices of his day. Although the various groups of the oppressed and outcasts

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<sup>16</sup> Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1992), xxiv, 144.

<sup>17</sup> Julia C. Ma, "Mission Possible: The Biblical Strategy for Reaching the Lost," *Mission of Jesus in the Spirit (Luke 4)*, (2016): 88.

of society all illustrate this aspect of Jesus' ministry, by handling them separately we can see the role each plays in the Gospel.<sup>18</sup>

A major social setting in the ministry of Jesus in the gospel of Luke is the table fellowship enjoyed through sharing a meal. The meal scene in the gospel of Luke is often highlighted throughout Jesus' ministry where He is invited to a meal, at a meal, or preparing a meal. Duyen Thi My Nguyen sees hospitality as a significant theme in Luke's gospel. Luke depicts hospitality as God's love and salvation expressed through a guest-host relationship that reveals God's reign on earth. Jesus in Luke's gospel shows various ways to be hospitable. Jesus expresses hospitality by restoring relationships, 'turning the tables' for radical change, and elevating the status of the downtrodden, especially the marginalized, and by embracing all.<sup>19</sup>

Immediately after Jesus called Levi, the tax collector, to follow him, Levi gave a banquet for Jesus. For the first time, we hear the charge that Jesus eats and drinks "with tax collectors and sinners" (5:29-32). In chapter 7, Simon the Pharisee invites Jesus to a meal at his house, where a sinful woman weeps at Jesus' feet and anoints the (7:36-50). When the crowds follow Jesus to a deserted place, Jesus feeds the multitude with five loaves and two fish (9:12-17). When another Pharisee invites Jesus to a meal, Jesus scandalizes his host first by not washing before the meal and then by castigating the Pharisees for being more concerned about washing the outside of vessels than about inner purity (11:37-52). In chapter 14 Jesus is again invited to the house of a leader of the Pharisees (14:1-24). This time he challenges the guests to take the lower seats rather than the seats of honor and then admonishes the host not to invite friends and relatives to a dinner but to invite "the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind" (14:11). The parable of the great banquet follows (14:15-24).<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> R. Alan Culpepper, *The Gospel of Luke*, in *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary*, Volume Nine, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 22.

<sup>19</sup> Duyen Thi My Nguyen, "Hospitality in Luke's Gospel, and Implications for Contemporary Living," *The Australasian Catholic Record* 99, no. 2 (April 2022): 164.

<sup>20</sup> Culpepper, *The Gospel of Luke*, 26.

The table becomes the meeting place to connect and commemorate socially significant occasions. The table becomes the place of promise to Jesus' disciples where they will eat and drink at Jesus' table in the kingdom. At the communion table, the bread becomes the broken body of Jesus, and the cup becomes the new covenant in Jesus' blood, and the Lord's supper is received in observance of the Lord's death until He comes again. At the table truths are taught, scriptures are expounded, instructed are received, and fellowship and friendships are forged.

### **Major Theme of the Text**

There are a few major themes of the text found in Luke 4:18. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me" is a major theme of the text. The Spirit of the Lord is available to all who have accepted the call to righteousness in faith and obedience. To walk in the Spirit is to deny the flesh. Resisted the devil and he will flee. Justin Jackson, in *The God who acts: Luke's presentation of God*, notes the things that have been fulfilled have not been achieved by man but by God and his active work in the world through Jesus Christ and by the Spirit. In his intervening grace, God has brought his salvation, a light of revelation to the Gentiles, and glory to his people.<sup>21</sup>

As the bearer of the Holy Spirit Jesus is at once unique . . .

Another major theme is "He has anointed me." The doctoral project will succeed when it is brought to the Lord, and through His Spirit, the mission is approved.

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<sup>21</sup> Justin Jackson, "THE GOD WHO ACTS: LUKE'S PRESENTATION OF GOD," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 64, no. 1 (March 2021): 96.

The next major theme in review is “To preach good news to the poor / afflicted.” Christianity is for everybody. God is not a respecter of persons.

Another major theme is “He has sent me.” The Lord asked the question, “Whom shall I send?” And “Who will go for us?” He can send those who make themselves available by being set apart.

The next major theme of the text is “To proclaim release to the captives.”

Another major theme of the text is “Recovery of sight to the blind.”

The next major theme of the text is “To set free the oppressed.”

The final major theme of the text is “To proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

## **Word Study**

### *New Testament Translation*

Once again, the pericope is as follows:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,  
Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor,  
He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives,  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set free those who are oppressed,  
To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19 NASB).

### *Old Testament Translation*

The pericope from Luke’s gospel is a reference to the Old Testament passage in Isaiah as follows:

The Spirit of the Lord God is on me,  
Because the Lord has anointed m  
To bring good news to the afflicted;

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
 To proclaim liberty to captives  
 And freedom to prisoners;  
 To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord  
 And the day of vengeance of our God;  
 To comfort all who mourn (Is 61:1-2, NASB).

The pericope uses intertextuality to draw on the Biblical passage in Isaiah sixty-one. As you read the New Testament you will notice the New Testament writers often use Old Testament scriptures as a reference in their writings. Intertextuality is often used to emphasize a concept, theme, or idea. The Old Testament scripture often serves as a baseline or anchor for the concept the writer will develop. In this case, the Old Testament passage is referenced to validate the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in the New Testament proclamation.

### *Key Words*

The following are key words and phrases in the word study that will be grammatically analyzed and interpreted:

Spirit  
 Lord  
 Preach the Gospel  
 To the Poor  
 Freedom  
 Prisoners  
 Favorable year of the Lord

### *Grammatical Analysis*

One of the words that is key in looking at people who are in need of God's grace and strength along the journey is the word "spirit." The English word "spirit", G4151, is



taken from the Greek *pneuma*.<sup>22</sup> In the Blue Letter Bible, Thayer's Greek Lexicon cites the general principle and understanding of "spirit" are both analogous and figurative in speech. In this context, we see the spiritual nature of Christ, higher than the highest angels, close to God and most intimately united to God. Another word under consideration is the word "of the Lord" taken from the Greek word *kyrios*. The word *kyrios*, G2962, denotes supremacy, as in supreme in authority. It is a masculine noun that is translated as controller. By implication, *kyrios* is Master, a respectful title; it implies God, Lord, master, Sir, and gives honor to God as the Ruler and Master of the universe.<sup>23</sup> The reference to the Spirit of the Lord denoted power and authority from God. Acts 1:8 states, *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth* (CSB). In Matthew 28:18, Jesus proclaims, *All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth* (CSB). Without the power of the Holy Spirit and the authority of Jesus Christ, the doctoral project is ineffective and lacks the necessary power and fuel to be accomplished. The command to "go" in Matthew 28:19 requires the power of the Holy Spirit.

The English word "anointed" is taken from the Greek *chrío*. The word *chrío*, G5530, speaks to the idea of contact, as in to smear or rub with oil. By implication, it means to consecrate to an office or religious service by the act of anointing. Jesus was

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<sup>22</sup> Blueletterbible.org, s.v., "spirit," Blueletterbible.com, lexicon/G4151/NASB95.

<sup>23</sup> Blueletterbible.org, s.v., "lord," Blueletterbible.org/lexicon/G5548/NASB95.

consecrated to the Messianic office and furnished with powers necessary for its administration (Luke 4:18; Isaiah 61:1).<sup>24</sup>

Significant to this word study are the words “preach the gospel.” The Greek word is “evangelize.” Strong’s G2097 defined as “evangelizing” translates to announcing good news, especially the gospel. It is a verb that means to declare, bring (declare, show) glad (good) tidings, and preach the gospel. Jesus evangelized! He proclaimed the Kingdom of God and the good news of salvation. He declared good tidings concerning salvation and deliverance (1 Corinthians 15:2, Luke 4:18, Isaiah 61:1).<sup>25</sup> The doctoral project will be used as a platform to proclaim good news to the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. The doctoral project will proclaim to them that there is a forum in the form of a support group that is there to give them a safe place to rest, receive support, and be informed of the way forward.

Another phrase of great importance and significance to the Bible passage is “to the poor.” The Greek translation is *ptochos*, which is derived from the Greek word *ptosso*, which means to crouch, and is akin to Strong’s G4422 and the alternate of G4098. The word poor is synonymous with a beggar (as in cringing), and a pauper which strictly denotes absolute or public mendicancy. Although also used in a qualified or relative sense; whereas Strong’s G3993 properly means only straitened circumstances in private, it is literally often as a noun or figuratively used to imply distressed, as in beggarly, and poor. In a broader sense, it denotes destitute of wealth, influence, position, and honors; it

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<sup>24</sup> Blueletterbible.org, s.v., “anointed,” Blueletterbible.org/lexicon/G5548/NASB95.

<sup>25</sup> Blueletterbible.org, s.v., “evangelize,” Blueletterbible.org/lexicon/G2097/NASB95.

denotes lowly, and afflicted (Matthew 11:5, Luke 4:18 from Isaiah 61:1).<sup>26</sup> In light of the position of the families and loved ones of the incarcerated, the meaning can be translated as spiritually poor due to the circumstances of the incarcerated loved one, and it could also denote completely lacking resources.<sup>27</sup>

Another word for consideration is “freedom.” The Greek word for freedom is *aphesis*. Strong’s G863 defines *aphesis* as freedom. It figuratively means pardon, deliverance, forgiveness, liberty, and remission. It is a feminine noun that can be used to denote release as from bondage, and imprisonment (Luke 4:18-19, Isaiah 61:1).<sup>28</sup> The families and loved ones of the incarcerated need to know that they do not have to do the time with their incarcerated loved one. They that have been held captive by this stigma can be released and set free. They will be given the word that will enable them to be released from guilt and shame as they are lifted up in prayer.

The word “prisoners” is interpreted here as those who are oppressed. The Greek word for a prisoner is *thrauo*, and it is used in the perfect passive participle tense. The word is used to depict the following: to break, break in pieces, shatter, and smite through. The translation can mean the prisoner is one who is broken by calamity, and one who is bruised (Exodus 15:6, Numbers 24:17, 2 Maccabees 15:16, Luke 4:18-19, Isaiah 58:6)<sup>29</sup> The support group forum, proposed in the doctoral project, will be a safe space where

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<sup>26</sup> Blueletterbible.org, s.v., “ptochos,” Blueletterbible.org/lexicon/G4434/NASB95.

<sup>27</sup> In light of the Greek definition of “ptochos” and ptosso,” it can be inferred that families and loved ones of persons incarcerated can be caught up in such a spirit of “cringing” and relate to these circumstances.

<sup>28</sup> Blueletterbible.org, s.v., “freedom,” Blueletterbible.org/lexicon/G859/NASB95.

<sup>29</sup> Blueletterbible.org, s.v., “prisoner,” Blueletterbible.org/lexicon/G2352/NASB95.

they can know *The Lord is near the brokenhearted; he saves those crushed in spirit* (Psalm 34:18, CSB).

The final word in the word study is “favorable.” Favorable is derived from the Greek word *dektos*. Favorable is an adjective that means accepted, acceptable, approved, and figuratively can mean propitious. Favorable denotes that most blessed time when salvation and the free favors of God profusely abound (Luke 4:24, Philippians 4:18, Acts 10:35, 2 Corinthians 6:2, Isaiah 49:8, Luke 4:19, Isaiah 61:2).<sup>30</sup> The proposed support group forum will provide a safe place for the families and loved ones to openly share their journey with their incarcerated loved one, and in the sharing, they can be comforted knowing there is community and solace with families that are going through and overcoming their circumstances as they can pray and receive prayer and support for themselves and their incarcerated loved one.

As Jesus stood in the synagogue to read, He was handed the scroll of Isaiah. The Bible passage he chose to read was Isaiah sixty-one. Jesus had been baptized, and He had returned from the wilderness temptation victorious over the wiles of the devil. He was empowered and anointed for the mission that had been assigned by the Father. His first statement was, “the Spirit of the Lord God is on Me.” He is letting the people know that He is not acting on His own agenda, but He has been consecrated and commissioned by God Himself. Jesus uses a passage that those seated in the synagogue are familiar with. The following passage explains the concept of intertextuality:

Beside these linguistic and literary dimensions, intertextuality carries a hermeneutical aspect. This hermeneutical aspect eludes the methodological rigour linguistic and literary investigations are – or should be – subjected to, but it may provide the underlying motive for greater precision in these investigations. An

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<sup>30</sup> Blueletterbible.org, s.v., “favorable,” Blueletterbible.org/lexicon/G1184/NASB95.

allusion implies that the alluding text, hermeneutically speaking, becomes involved in the source text's communication. Allusions in prophetic text help substantiate the authority of the source texts and allow the texts making the allusions to share in this authority. They indicate the relevance of the source texts by recalling the topics these texts were addressing. Furthermore, they sometimes attempt to dissolve obvious tensions between sources, or between older text and the new situation of the reader.<sup>31</sup>

In the above overview on intertextuality, there is an inference of the New Testament borrowing from the Old Testament. Luke may have borrowed from Isaiah to craft the pericope; however, Jesus took ownership of Isaiah 61:1-2 when He proclaimed the scripture in Luke's gospel before the people in the synagogue.

Jesus used a passage that those seated in the synagogue were familiar with to herald His mission and ministry. After He expounded the scripture, Jesus took his seat and made a statement that identified Him as the Christ, "Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled."<sup>32</sup>

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the Biblical foundation has addressed the relationship of the pericope to the doctoral project. The doctoral project proposes to bring to light the growing prison population ravishing Montgomery County and Dayton, Ohio, and the families and loved ones of the incarcerated, particularly in the African American community. The context is the Mount Carmel United Holy Church in Dayton, Ohio. Mass incarceration in the Dayton area has a negative impact on the family, particularly the African American family, as it impedes family support and parent-child relationships.

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<sup>31</sup> Henk Leene, *Newness in Old Testament Prophecy: An Intertextual Study* (Boston, MA: Leiden, 2014), 34.

<sup>32</sup> Luke 4:21, CSB.

The Mount Carmel United Holy Church leaders will participate in a support group forum with the family members and loved ones of the incarcerated to discover their needs and requirements, then the context leaders will be equipped to design an ongoing support group to serve the needs of families and loved ones of the incarcerated. The duration of this Doctor of Ministry Project will be six weeks. The methods used to collect and compile data were pre-project and post-project questionnaires, interviews, and data. The completion of this doctoral project will enable the leaders of Mount Carmel United Holy Church to design a ministry that collaborates with local organizations to empower families within the surrounding community to successfully communicate with and assist incarcerated loved ones while they receive support and are given the opportunity for resources through partnering community agencies.

The scripture focus of Luke 4:18-19 serves as the engine of this pericope that invites those involved in ministry to seek the Spirit of the Lord God for guidance and direction. This Biblical passage relates to the doctoral project as it ministers to the families and loved ones of the incarcerated. When the objective and mission of the doctoral project are in line with the word of God, as in the pericope, the foundation is laid. When Jesus stood up in the synagogue in his hometown of Nazareth to proclaim the gospel, the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him. He had already been to the Jordan River to be baptized. The Holy Spirit descended upon Him and His Father let Him know He is well pleased with Him. He withstood the devil in the wilderness temptation during a forty-day fast. The Spirit of the Lord God was upon Him as He returned to Galilee victorious, full of power, and anointed. Since Jesus had to fast, pray, and consecrate Himself, the doctoral project must be initiated in the same manner moreover.

Since Jesus' inaugural ministry began with the Spirit of the Lord upon Him to teach and preach the gospel, then all involved in ministry and the work of the Lord must seek the Spirit of the Lord God, as well as the anointing to fulfill their kingdom purpose. Therefore, this passage in Luke informs the doctoral project.

Those who have been consecrated and anointed to do the work of ministry must follow Jesus' example. For this doctoral project to work, it must be powered by the Spirit of the Lord and follow Jesus' mission example:

Preach the Good News to the poor.

Proclaim release to the captives.

Recovery of sight to the blind,

Set free the oppressed.

Proclaim the Lord's favor.

The Biblical Foundations anchors the doctoral project and leads to the exploration of the Historical Foundations.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS**

This Historical Foundation chapter will examine the history of the penal system in the United States (U.S.) of America from its origin to the present day. More specifically, it will examine three periods of the development and formation of the U.S. prison system. This study will begin by considering the early history of the penal system between the years 1776 and 1865. This study will also look at some of the earliest prisons in the United States and the foreign and domestic influencers that developed the model for the United States penal system. The pre-Civil War era's history will consider the penal system's tendency towards operating as a means of punishment or rehabilitation.

This study will then look at the penal system in the United States in the post-Emancipation era between the years 1865 and 1877. This chapter will focus on the African American incarceration factors in the post-Civil War era that impact the rate of African Americans incarcerated today. The post-Emancipation influences that contributed to the development of the current prison system in the United States will be examined. This study will address punishment, rehabilitation, and the labor-intensive concept of the American prison. The prison system developed after the labor camp concept was initiated and developed during this period in the United States penal system.

This chapter will conclude with an overview of the period ending Reconstruction and entering the Modern-Day Prison System: 1877 – present.



This study will examine the history of the United States penal system while considering the American penal system and its relationship with people of color. It will focus on the effects of Reconstruction and discuss the relationship of the United States penal system to the African American slaves, soldiers, freedmen, and the effects on the present-day African American families and loved ones of the incarcerated. Finally, this research chapter will review the American penal system during this era and discuss the ramifications of the laws and acts put in place during this period of history and the resultant cultural trauma in the African American family and community relationships. This writing will also discuss the American family, particularly the African American family, and its indelible relationship to mass incarceration and its traumatic effects on families, African American families, and surrounding communities in the present era.

### **Early History of the Penal System: 1776-1865**

An analysis of the early penal system in the United States includes the origins and the orchestrators of the early penal system in the US. Prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, prisoners in the United States were detained for minor offenses such as petty larceny and payment of debts, as well as for major offenses such as murder. They were held for short periods of time pending corporal punishment. Punishment included the whipping post, the pillory, the gallows, convict ships, and transportation abroad.<sup>1</sup> Transportation abroad was conducted by convict convoys. A convict convoy was a convoy of ships that sailed from England with the intent to create a penal colony for the British Empire.

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<sup>1</sup> Eamonn Carrabine, "Imagining Prison: Culture, History and Space," Academia.edu; J. Bender, "The Novel and the Rise of the Penitentiary: Narrative and Ideology in Defoe," ed. Daniel Defoe, Haywood Gay, Mandeville Hogarth, and Finch Fielding, *Stanford Literature Review* (Spring 1984): 55-84.

On January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1788, the first ships of a British convoy landed at Botany Bay, Australia. The convoy was dubbed The First Fleet and departed from Portsmouth, England. A group numbering around 1,500 landed on the shores of Australia with the intent of building a new penal colony from scratch to house current and future convicts from the British Empire. This colony would later evolve into the current Commonwealth nation of Australia. Australia had been discovered and documented by the explorer James Cook in 1770 and was considered to be a remote spit of inhabited land at the edge of the world. Cook was the first European to discover and document the eastern coastline of the continent. Before the establishment of Australia as a penal colony for the empire, the British had sent their convicts to the Thirteen Colonies in North America. The state of Georgia had its origins as a British penal colony where thousands of convicted citizens were shipped to live out the rest of their days. After the American Revolution saw the United States become an independent nation, they unsurprisingly no longer wanted to take on British prisoners. The American Revolution officially ended in 1783 leaving the British without a port for its large prisoner population.<sup>2</sup>

As indicated above, the history of United States prison system is intertwined with the British Empire penal system practices of transporting banished prisoners to colonial settlements for forced labor.

The British empire had a significant influence on the development of the U.S. penal system policy and architecture. Some key influencers of the early penal system were John Howard, Elizabeth Fry, Robert Raikes, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, and Robert Smith. The word “penitentiary” comes from the Latin word for remorse.<sup>3</sup> The term “penitentiary” was influenced by a group of Quakers from the city of brotherly love, Philadelphia, who after the American Revolution formed the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons. The Quaker concept of a penitentiary

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<sup>2</sup> Grant Piper, “Australia’s Surprising Origin as a Prison at the Edge of the World,” Exploring History, January 18, 2021, <https://medium.com/exploring-history/australias-surprising-origin-as-a-prison-at-the-edge-of-the-world-3225368b029e>.

<sup>3</sup> *Online Etymology Dictionary*, s.v., “penitentiary,” <https://etymologyonline.com>.

attempted to evolve it into a place to reflect and do penance so that the prisoner would be rehabilitated.<sup>4</sup>

### **Early Pioneers of Prison Reform**

#### *John Howard*

William H. Render, in “Through Prison Bars: The Lives and Labours of John Howard and Elizabeth Fry,” notes the following about John Howard and his rise as an advocate for prison reform. John Howard was born September 2, 1726, in Hackney, a pleasant village approximately three miles from London, England. His father was a successful businessman and his mother died while he was very young. John Howard was a sickly child, and his father sent him to a farmer’s wife in Cardington, England, in hope that the fresh air and sunshine would help his physical stamina improve. The green field and fresh country air refreshed his spirit and renewed his health. This would be a method John would use in many future instances to improve his health and clear his mind of stressors. After he came of age, his father sent him to a seminary and a reputable education establishment. At a young age, it was evident that he was responsible and not given to impetuous behavior. He was a Christian and believed in clean, virtuous living that was evident in his good stewardship. He did well in school and kept his character intact as he did not give in to the foolishness of youth. When his schooling was completed, his father enrolled him in an apprenticeship in commerce with the intent that his son should succeed him in the family business. John was not quite seventeen when his

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<sup>4</sup> Walnut Street Prison, <https://law.jrank.org/pages/11192/Walnut-Street-Prison.html>.

father passed, and he decided that he would not run the family business. He received a fortune in inheritance from the family business and other properties; however, he chose not to follow the business career that was chosen for him. Instead, he chose to receive a portion of his inheritance to travel and become an independent thinker. The executors, because of his responsible and upright character, forwarded a portion of his inheritance at his request with confidence that he would use it wisely. He traveled to France and Italy taking in the history, the architect, the art galleries and overall cultural of the areas he traveled.<sup>5</sup>

After Render gives an overview of the life and characteristics of John Howard, he elaborates on the events that led to his advocacy for prison reform. In 1755, an earthquake and fire occurred in Lisbon and became the greatest catastrophe of his time. John felt deeply compelled by the love of Christ to render aid to the victims. The events that followed orchestrated his first philanthropic effort outside of his country and was the beginning of his life work as a philanthropist. He embarked on a journey to Lisbon on *Hanover*, a ship laden with aid to the earthquake victims in Portugal. At the time, war was eminent between England and France, and during the execution of the mission of mercy, the ship was seized by a French privateer. John Howard, the crew, and passengers were taken into port, denied their rights, and thrown into a dungeon of a castle that served as a prison. The barbaric, callous, inhumane condition of the deep dungeon he was

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<sup>5</sup> William H. Render, *Through Prison Bars: The Lives and Labours of John Howard and Elizabeth Fry*, Mysterious Press.com, 2017, ProQuest Ebook Central, 8-12, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.dtl.idm.oclc.org/lib/dtl/detail.action?docID=4861055>.

subjected to became John Howard's reason to dedicate his philanthropic means to prison reform.<sup>6</sup>

More, he felt that he dare not silence the voice within, which bade him stretch out a brotherly hand to the distressed and dying and become the Prisoner's Friend. Something must be at once done, and with splendid vigour he addressed himself to the removal of the abuses which obtained in the goal for whose good government he was responsible. Personally, he overhauled the whole management of the place, infusing a new spirit of humanity in its keepers. Whatever could be done in the way of cleansing and sanitation, and to make the wretched structure suitable as a human habitation, was devised and carried out. Further, he did not overlook the moral and religious element, or indeed any possible influence which could relieve and raise the hapless hostages of the law.<sup>7</sup>

John Howard's life work with the prison systems involved extensive travel throughout his country and in foreign countries visiting prisons, making note of the mostly deplorable conditions, documenting his findings, and petitioning to the authorities to reform the inhumane conditions of the prison system and incorporate the findings of the better designed and managed penal institutions. Howard's work on early prison reform sought to promote better conditions and rehabilitation and condemned inhumane treatment and punishment.

### *Elizabeth Fry*

Elizabeth Fry was born in 1780 at Earlham Hall near Norfolk, England. She became known as "the female John Howard." Early in life she dedicated her life to the Lord as a Quaker and joined the Society of Friends. Elizabeth married and had children and found her passion in loving care for the poor, unfortunate, and children. She was

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<sup>6</sup> Render, *Through Prison Bars*, 8-12.

<sup>7</sup> Render, *Through Prison Bars*, 23.

forceful and effective in her speaking and exhortations and became a minister.<sup>8</sup> In 1813, she had her first visit to the London Newgate Prison to minister to the female prisoners. This began her journey of prison reform for the female inmates. After observing and speaking with the female inmates and providing schooling for their children, she implemented a plan for the women. The rules submitted to the Newgate female prisoners for approval were so interesting, showing how practical a philanthropist Mrs. Fry was in this work; this became the first formulated efforts at female prison reform:

1. That a woman be appointed for the general supervision of the women.
2. That the women be engaged in needlework, knitting, or any other suitable employment.
3. That there be no begging, swearing, gambling, card-playing, quarrelling, or universal conversation. That all novels, plays, and other improper books be excluded; that all bad words be avoided, and any default in these particulars be reported to the matron.
4. That there be a yard-keeper, chosen from among the women, to inform them when their friends come; to see that they leave their work with a monitor when they go to the grating, and that they do not spend any time there, except with their friends. If any woman found disobedient in these respects, the yard-keeper is to report the same to the matron.
5. That the women be divided into classes of not more than twelve, and that a monitor be appointed to each class.
6. That monitors be chosen from among the most orderly of the women that can read, to superintend the work and conduct of the others.
7. That the monitors not only overlook the women in their own classes, but if they observe any others disobeying the rules, that they inform the monitor of the class to which such persons belong, who is immediately to report to the matron and the deviations to be set down on a slate.
8. That any monitor breaking the rules shall be dismissed from her office, and the most suitable in the class be selected to take her place.

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<sup>8</sup> Render, *Through Prison Bars*, 53-56.

9. That the monitors be particularly careful to see that the women come with clean hands and face to their work and that they are quiet in their employment.
10. That at the ringing of the bell at 9 o'clock in the morning the women collect in the workroom to hear a portion of Scripture read by one of the visitors or the monitor, and that the monitors afterwards conduct the classes from thence to their respective wards in an orderly manner.
11. That the women be again collected for the reading at 6 o'clock in the evening, when the work shall be given in charge to the matron by the monitors.
12. That the matron keep an exact account of the work done by the women, and of their conduct.<sup>9</sup>

Elizabeth Fry's work with the women's prison reform was reviewed and sought after by many. She visited many women's prison and convict ships in the country and in some foreign countries, while documenting the findings and advocating for improvements.

### *Robert Raikes*

Robert Raikes was born on September 14, 1736, in Gloucester. His father, Robert Raikes, Sr., was a prominent citizen and the owner of the *Gloucester Journal*.

Raikes initial philanthropic concern was for prison reform. He was a lifelong friend of the great evangelical prison reformer John Howard and in 1773 accompanied Howard on a visit to Gloucester jail.<sup>10</sup>

Raikes pioneered the phenomenal growth of Sunday School by rounding up the urchins and ragamuffins to teach them to read and write using the Bible as their school textbook. He believed that by teaching them reading, writing, discipline, and good behavior, he could prevent them from a life of poverty, ignorance, and crime.

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<sup>9</sup> Render, *Through Prison Bars*, 62-63.

<sup>10</sup> Dave Littlewood, "Robert Raikes – The man who 'invented' Sunday School," *New Life Publishing, Heroes of the Faith*, no. 45 (August 19, 2021).

### *Thomas Eddy*

Thomas Eddy, a Quaker merchant, was a pioneer in the development of the early United States penal system. The U.S. penal system reform was instituted in the state of Pennsylvania and attracted distinguished visitors from foreign nations such as Alexis de Tocqueville to tour the penal system and observe techniques used in the U.S. penal institutions. The Walnut Street Prison, a Philadelphia institution, was an American centerpiece for prison reform.<sup>11</sup>

### *Robert Smith*

The Walnut Street Prison was designed by Robert Smith, a prominent Pennsylvanian architect.

In the eighteenth century, America had few architectural achievements to attract serious attention abroad, but Robert Smith's Walnut Street Prison at Philadelphia, built just before the Revolution, was exceptional. Known in Europe and arousing discussion by social reformers everywhere, it was a product of the Quaker interest and support which made Philadelphia a leader in such matters. For example, as far back as 1722 the city had built a new prison in which the debtors and criminals were segregated into two buildings for the first time in Colonial America. 'The Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons,' formed in 1787 was another evidence of Philadelphia's preoccupation with these matters.<sup>12</sup>

Thomas Eddy eventually came to be known as the "John Howard of America."<sup>13</sup>

The Auburn Prison, located in the state of New York, was in stark contrast to the Walnut Street Prison. The Auburn Prison was built on the idea that prisoners could not be rehabilitated and required harsh treatment which included whippings, flogging, and

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<sup>11</sup> W. David Lewis, *From Newgate to Dannemora: The Rise of the Penitentiary in New York: 1796-1848* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Press, 1965), 2.

<sup>12</sup> Charles E. Peterson, "Wall Street Prison, 1774-75," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 12, no. 4 (1953): 26, <https://doi.org/>.

<sup>13</sup> Lewis, *From Newgate to Dannemor*, 4.



humiliation with the intent of breaking the spirit of the prisoners. Any infraction, including minor infractions, brought swift and severe punishment. Under the Auburn system, all inmates wore black and white striped outfits which made them look grotesque and ridiculous.<sup>14</sup>

### *Henry Latrobe*

In 1796, the English architect and engineer Benjamin Henry Latrobe, destined to become one of the greatest of the profession in America, landed at Norfolk, Virginia. Two years later, he made his first trip north. The circumstances of this occasion are described in a letter to the Governor of the Commonwealth, for whom he was then building a large penitentiary in Richmond.<sup>15</sup> In the same summer, Benjamin Henry Latrobe observed and admired the construction of a nest of wasps at the Rippon Lodge in Prince William County where he was lodging. He decided to investigate the nest. He dissected it and disassembled it in order to analyze the materials it was made of and the contents within. From the start, he noticed some of the wasps patrolled the area while the others constructed the nest. The wasps gathered materials from nearby resources and built cells within the nest that were evenly spaced and smooth. One year later Latrobe accepted the position as architect for the Richmond Penitentiary — Virginia's first penitentiary.<sup>16</sup> Philip Schwarz, author of *Slave Laws in Virginia*, argues that Virginians responded to

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<sup>14</sup> Lewis, *From Newgate to Dannemora*, 81-92.

<sup>15</sup> Peterson, "Wall Street Prison, 1774-75," 26.

<sup>16</sup> Hilary Louise Coulson, *The Penitentiary at Richmond: Slavery, State Building, and Labor in the South's First State Prison*, UC San Diego Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2016, 32-34, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/651769d7>.

slave behavior and passed laws dependent on “whites’ perception and assumptions about that behavior.”<sup>17</sup> Schwarz’s argument about the Virginia legal code and punishment of slaves proves the strong relationship between the institution of slavery and the law of Virginia.<sup>18</sup>

Coulson’s studies reveal that within a short time, Latrobe’s oversight of the building of the Richmond Penitentiary became compromised due to chronic underfunding, space limitations, and poor oversight, including the state’s refusal to make necessary repairs and failure to address sanitation problems that spawned filth, disease, and high death rates. Latrobe had a tense relationship with the builders and the Clerk of the Works. He wrote a letter to the Governor to point out the incompetence and lack of integrity of the Clerk of the Works which resulted in loss of materials and capital, and little progress of the building. In 1798, Latrobe’s design for the Bank of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia was accepted and he left the Richmond penitentiary project even though it was incomplete.<sup>19</sup>

#### *Distinction in Prisons and Attitudes in the North and South*

Coulson further cites that the penitentiary system in the United States attracted admiring visitors from several European countries during the 19th century. Eager to learn how to implement a system of long-term confinement, De Tocqueville and de Beaumont were some of the first foreign visitors to the United States who surveyed the penitentiary

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<sup>17</sup> Philip Schwarz, *Slaves Laws in Virginia: Studies of Legal History in the South* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 1.

<sup>18</sup> Coulson, *The Penitentiary at Richmond*, 29-30.

<sup>19</sup> Coulson, *The Penitentiary at Richmond*, 64-66.

systems. While several penitentiary systems in the North were founded on the idea that labor and work would reform the soul of the convict — attitudes toward labor in the South differed. De Tocqueville found Americans of the North to be hard-working, virtuous, and reform oriented. “In the north . . . a great number of white people are found willing to do any work. There, moreover, labour is honourable,”<sup>20</sup> he surmised,

In the South, on the contrary, and particularly in the slave holding states, there are fewer persons of white colour willing to do the harder labours of husbandry or industry. This trouble is left to the negroes. Labour is not honoured in the south; it is detested as a servile thing.<sup>21</sup>

This observation was not true for all southerners, but it was so for those who were in power, who avoided labor, had slaves, and were responsible for running the government and the penitentiary systems in the south. De Tocqueville and de Beaumont further observed that labor in the south was left for slaves, so when criminals were made to labor in the penitentiaries, it put the status of the prisoner in the same category as a slave.<sup>22</sup>

In this period during the early history of the U.S. prison system, slavery was still intact and African Americans were a new consideration in the North and not a factor in the operation of the southern penitentiary. The lines between slavery and freedom were blurred when it came to the penal codes and penitentiary system in the state of Virginia, and since the penitentiary was founded in a society steeped in slavery, attitudes and goals

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<sup>20</sup> Coulson, *The Penitentiary at Richmond*, 167; Alexis de Tocqueville and Gustave de Beaumont, *On the Penitentiary System in the United States and its Application in France; with an Appendix on Penal Colonies and also Statistical Notes* (Philadelphia, PA: Carey Publishing, 1833), 257.

<sup>21</sup> Coulson, *The Penitentiary at Richmond*, 165-167; Alexis de Tocqueville and Gustave de Beaumont, *On the Penitentiary System in the United States and its Application in France; with an Appendix on Penal Colonies and also Statistical Notes* (Philadelphia, PA: Carey Publishing, 1833), 257.

<sup>22</sup> Coulson, *The Penitentiary at Richmond*, 168.

for the penitentiary were steeped in the institution of slavery. In 1865, when the Emancipation Proclamation was signed and all slaves were given freedom, the penitentiary was poised to replace the peculiar institution of slavery.<sup>23</sup> With the rise in the incarceration rate of African American convicts, the overcrowding of facilities, the convict leasing for-profit models, and the lack of moral prison reform, the Southern style of incarceration became the dominant model for the United States penal system.<sup>24</sup> Even after Emancipation, the Civil War, and the burning of Richmond, a type of slavery was strong enough to recover in a new form that ushered in the rise of mass incarceration in American society. This all happened under the guise of the state penitentiary system.<sup>25</sup>

### **Reconstruction and the Post-Emancipation Prison System: 1865 – 1877**

The original documentation that made up the United States Constitution never addressed slavery and did not use the word slave. During the period preceding the Civil War, African American slaves were considered the property of their owners without rights guaranteed to all Americans. When African Americans were freed from slavery after the Emancipation Proclamation, new laws had to be written to support their rights as U.S. citizens. The tragedy in American history is that these laws and amendments were not enforceable, and the outcome is that African Americans' rights as free citizens were not protected post-Emancipation and are still in question today.

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<sup>23</sup> Coulson, *The Penitentiary at Richmond*, 169-170.

<sup>24</sup> Coulson, *The Penitentiary at Richmond*, 184-185.

<sup>25</sup> Coulson, *The Penitentiary at Richmond*, 224.

## Reconstruction Amendments and Laws

### *The Thirteenth Amendment*

With the Civil War coming to an end and the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, the United States government had to face the circumstances surrounding the plight of the African American freedmen and consider the ramifications on the economy after the abolishment of slavery and write applicable policies and laws. The Thirteenth Amendment, which instituted the abolition of slavery, was passed by Congress on January 31, 1865, and was ratified on December 6, 1865. The Thirteenth Amendment changed a portion of Article IV, Section Two as follows:

Section One: Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section Two: Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.<sup>26</sup>

With the exception stated above in Section One – “neither slavery nor involuntary servitude” – came the justification for the criminalization of the African American freedmen with the penitentiary taking the place of the plantation as a place to hold slaves.

Regrettably, President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth on the evening of April 14, 1865; he would not live to celebrate the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment. President Lincoln was taken at a time of great upheaval — politically, socially, economically, and spiritually.

Lincoln’s assassination shocked the nation. In April of 1865, with the war ended, many Americans considered the president a hero who had saved the nation from

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<sup>26</sup> National Constitution Center, *Interactive Constitution*, Independence Mall 525 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA: 2022, <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/amendment/amendment-xiii>.

division. Lincoln had been able to use his popularity to build support for the Thirteenth Amendment. Without Lincoln to push the matter, some abolitionists feared that the pace of ratification would stall. Lincoln had also been able to outmaneuver the Radical Republican congressmen who wanted to punish the South for the Civil War. If Lincoln had lived, the history of post-war reconstruction, and the United States, might have been very different.<sup>27</sup>

President Lincoln learned a philosophy that he incorporated into his governing style. When he was a young man competing in wrestling contests on the frontier, he would garner respect and appreciation from his defeated opponent by showing mercy and compassion. President Lincoln clearly expressed that federal authorities should treat the defeated South with the same expression of mercy and compassion he learned as a young man. Regarding the defeated South, he urged federal authorities to “Let ‘em up easy.”<sup>28</sup>

### *The Fourteenth Amendment*

The Fourteenth Amendment states the following:

Section One Rights Guaranteed: All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.<sup>29</sup>

Attitudes on race and slavery during the Reconstruction led to the development of three constitutional amendments between 1865 and 1870. The Fourteenth Amendment,

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<sup>27</sup> Michell Dakota Beck, *Reconstruction and its Aftermath: Freed Slaves after the Civil War* (Broomall, PA: Mason Crest, 2020), 27-28.

<sup>28</sup> Beck, *Reconstruction and its Aftermath*, 25.

<sup>29</sup> Constitution Annotated: Analysis and Interpretation of the U.S. Constitution, Library of Congress, Congress.gov.

also known as the Howard Amendment, has been the subject of discussion and debate centered on the interpretation and intention of the amendment's original meaning.<sup>30</sup>

The vote of the Southern states was required to pass the Fourteenth Amendment. The amendment was passed in the fall of 1865 securing the rights of citizenship to the Negro, as all people born in the United States; however, those rights were quickly subverted by violence and atrocities instigated by southern whites.

Long before the war, that prescient observer of America, Alexis de Tocqueville, had predicted:

The most formidable of all ills that threaten the future of the Union arises from the presence of a black population upon its territory. Slavery had dominated the thoughts, actions, and dreams of the antebellum South and had loomed like a colossus over Southern politics. The institution that had seemed immutable was gone in 1865, but the Black people remained.<sup>31</sup>

Turmoil ensued as Black people were freed from the institution of slavery, but with no opportunities or direction, they faced physical, mental, and sexual violence and the threat of being incarcerated or lynched. Many, at that time, resigned to continued servitude as sharecroppers.

### *The Fifteenth Amendment*

The Fifteenth Amendment states the following:

Section One: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Paul Finkelman, "Rehearsal for Reconstruction: Antebellum Origins of the Fourteenth Amendment," in *The Facts of Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of John Hope Franklin*, eds. Eric Anderson and Alfred A. Moss, Jr. (Baton Rouge, LA: and London, UK: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), 1.

<sup>31</sup> George C. Rable, *But There Was No Peace: The Role of Violence in the Politics of Reconstruction* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1984), 17; Sidney Andrews, *South Since the War*, ed. David Donald (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Publishers, 1971), 22; Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 2 vols (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945), 1:370.

Reconstruction, in the sense that is most pertinent to us today, consisted in the civil rights settlement embodied in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, which together nationalized civil liberty in the United States.<sup>33</sup>

### *The Black Codes*

Even after the Civil War had ended and laws were passed to give African Americans equal rights as citizens of the United States, the white southerners insisted on preserving and enforcing the master-slave relationship between blacks and whites. Mississippi became the first of several ex-Confederate states to adopt Black Codes, laws that disempowered African Americans by sharply restricting their mobility and legal rights.<sup>34</sup>

Southerners united in support of policies to ensure a stable labor force, to keep wages low, to impose restrictive contracts on laborers, and to resist any efforts by the freedmen to buy or rent land. Legislators, by a large majority, enacted Black Codes to ensure Black economic dependency. Law enforcement officials and the courts also aided in this effort. More important, perhaps, southerners united to promote white supremacy. Nearly all shared the belief that the subordination of Blacks was necessary to preserve a peaceful society. Therefore, in addition to economic restrictions, the Black Codes

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<sup>32</sup> Constitution Annotated, Analysis and Interpretation of the U.S. Constitution, "Fifteenth Amendment," <https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/amendment-15/>.

<sup>33</sup> Herman Belz, "The Constitution and Reconstruction," in *The Facts of Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of John Hope Franklin*, eds. Eric Anderson and Alfred A. Moss, Jr. (Baton Rouge, LA: London, UK: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), 190.

<sup>34</sup> Robert S. Levine, *The Failed Promise: Reconstruction, Frederick Douglass, and the impeachment of Andrew Johnson* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 2021), 58.



contributed to the legal and social subordination. “Any Black assertion of freedom met with resistance perpetrated by individual whites, organized terrorist groups, or outlaw gangs, who often received active or passive support from most members of the white community.”<sup>35</sup>

The freedmen could not conduct themselves in the manner of free citizens. They could not speak to whites or make eye contact. They were considered insolent, or insubordinate if they did. Retribution by whites and white crowds were swift and violent. Whites strictly opposed Blacks’ efforts to achieve education or religious freedom. White crowds attacked the freedmen for proclaiming their rights as Americans and behaving as equal citizens. Law enforcement officers often sided with these Whites, regularly arresting Blacks for breaches of the peace — which included attempts by the freed people merely to behave as free people.<sup>36</sup>

Black Codes, laws that regulated the activities of free blacks as well as slaves, had been passed in many American colonies before the American Revolution. After the Civil War, the southern state legislatures simply updated the old Black Codes to reflect the new post-slavery world. Some of the new Codes prevented Blacks from moving away from the plantations where they lived in slavery. Other codes forced Blacks to sign one-year work contracts, which they were not permitted to break, or to work for such low wages that they would never get out of debt. There were rules and regulations about where Blacks could settle, marry, or own property. These codes created a system that was little

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<sup>35</sup> Roberta Sue Alexander, “Presidential Reconstruction: Ideology and Change,” in *The Facts of Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of John Hope Franklin*, eds. Eric Anderson and Alfred A. Moss, Jr. (Baton Rouge, LA: London, UK: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), 40.

<sup>36</sup> Alexander, “Presidential Reconstruction,” 40.

better than slavery — certainly not what Lincoln and other Republican leaders had intended for Blacks when they were freed.<sup>37</sup>

Black Codes were used to provoke violence against African Americans. Black Codes were also used to jail and imprison African Americans in the post-Civil War and Reconstruction eras. In today's society, African Americans are subject to law enforcement harassment which are similar to the Black Codes but have been informally named "Driving While Black," "Shopping while Black," "Jogging while Black," "Birdwatching while Black," and "Barbequing in their own yard while Black."<sup>38</sup> The fallout of the Reconstruction era created unresolved trauma in the African American community. These traumatic experiences shape and affect the African American community in 2023.

### **The End of Reconstruction and the Modern-Day Prison System: 1877 – Present**

#### *The End of Reconstruction*

The Reconstruction era lasted from 1863 to 1877. The purpose of Reconstruction was to reintegrate the seceded southern states back into the United States of America and to integrate four million freedmen into the United States of America.<sup>39</sup> During this fourteen-year timeframe, the white South and the North came to an agreement that

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<sup>37</sup> Beck, *Reconstruction and its Aftermath*, 35-36.

<sup>38</sup> Over the year the phrase "... while Black" has morphed from "Driving While Black" to include recent news stories citing incidents of Blacks being harassed, arrested, or sometimes killed while carrying on everyday activities due to racial profiling.

<sup>39</sup> History.com, "Reconstruction," eds., Amada Onion, Missy Sullivan, Matt Mullen, and Christian Zapata, updated April 24, 2023, 1, <https://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/reconstruction>.

secession and slavery were wrong; however, racial segregation and white supremacy overshadowed all proposed solutions. And the white South was able to secure their racial ideology and political victory out of the military defeat of the Civil War.

Briefly put, the South did it by changing its uniform from Confederate gray to Ku Klux white and by reverting from open warfare to mass terrorism. Since those at the helm of the nation did not see fit to order the Union army to seek and destroy this Confederate underground, the terrorist did not have to contend with professional soldiers and armaments but were left free to devote all their energies to terrorizing the unarmed black civilian population and those few white Southerners and newcomers from the North who joined with them in an effort to introduce democracy to the region.<sup>40</sup>

The Reconstruction amendments – the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth – were not enforceable without the presence of the Union army; other laws were passed to replace them and render them ineffective and unenforceable. At the end of Reconstruction, Black Codes were enhanced by Jim Crow laws introducing new ways to invoke the exception to the Thirteenth Amendment.

Those who attempted to defy Jim Crow laws often faced arrest, fines, jail sentences, violence, and death. The legal system was stacked against Black citizens with former Confederate soldiers working as police and judges, making it difficult for African Americans to win court cases and ensuring they were subject to Black codes. These codes worked in conjunction with labor camps for the incarcerated, where prisoners were treated as enslaved people. Black offenders typically received longer sentences than their white equals, and because of the grueling work, often did not live out their entire sentence.<sup>41</sup>

It was the election and compromise of 1876 that ended Reconstruction.<sup>42</sup> However, almost a century later, as the nation entered the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960s,

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<sup>40</sup> Stetson Kennedy, *After Appomattox: How the South won the War* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1995), 2.

<sup>41</sup> History.com, “Jim Crow Laws,” A&E Television Networks, February 28, 2018, <https://www.history.com/topics/early-20th-century-us/jim-crow-laws>.

<sup>42</sup> History.com, “Reconstruction,” A&E Television Networks, October 29, 2009, <https://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/reconstruction>.

African Americans were still fighting for political, economic, and social equality promised through the Reconstruction amendments.<sup>43</sup>

The end of Reconstruction was solidified by the Compromise of 1877 when Rutherford B. Hayes won the presidential election in a controversial election. Through the Compromise of 1877, an agreement was reached when the South pledged to accept the Hayes presidency and to accept the civil rights of African American freedmen. In exchange, Hayes would enact the immediate withdrawal of Union troops from the South and cede control back to the Southern states. Hayes kept his promise; however, the South did not.<sup>44</sup>

### *Convict Leasing*

Different states acknowledged financial benefits from convict labor. Texas leased convict labor to businesses to cover the cost of housing inmates. This type of labor was heralded as being a way for convicts to pay for their own upkeep; however, convict leasing proved to be very profitable for the businesses leasing the convicts. Because of the financial profits, the state decided to lease the convicts, eliminate the middleman, and make the profits for themselves. As work through the railroad and other businesses became scarce, the state of Texas leased the convicts out to local farmers. The state realized farming was more lucrative and decided to purchase state farms which immediately yielded remarkable profits. These prison farms, as they were called, were

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<sup>43</sup> History.com, "Reconstruction," A&E Television Networks, October 29, 2009, <https://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/reconstruction>.

<sup>44</sup> History.com, "Reconstruction," A&E Television Networks, October 29, 2009, <https://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/reconstruction>.

operated in the same manner as the plantations. Texas was one of the states that participated in convict leasing.

The state of Texas contracted with private companies to provide convict labor for construction work, railroad work, and other businesses outside of the prison walls. The idea of convict leasing was to have the prisoners work for their own upkeep. During an economic downturn, however, the companies leasing the convicts would return them to the penitentiaries. The prison administration would then have to find other means to hire out their prisoners. Prison officials sought out local farms to negotiate contracts for convict labor. Since many of the prisoners did not have specific skills or trades, farm labor became a constant resource for all prisoners. Contracting convicts out for farm labor proved to be very lucrative for the state prison administration. Not all farms yielded good earnings; but overall, the financial profit increased with time. Because of the vast financial profit, Texas decided to purchase a state farm.<sup>45</sup>

For the period 1886 through 1908, the states earned a clear profit of slightly over \$660,000.00 from the prisoners working the share farm.

As the farm prospered, prison officials came to realize that substantial sums of money could be earned from farming despite the unpredictable factors affecting the yearly production and prices.

Within a few months of its purchase, the Wynne farm began paying handsome dividends. It produced enough cotton, corn, vegetables, and animal fodder to supply all of its own needs with enough left over to help fill the needs of the Huntsville unit. Much of the cotton from the farm went into the manufacture of prison clothing, although some was made into 'lowells and duck' for sale on the open market.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Paul M. Lucko, "Prison System," Texas State Historical Association, updated September 24, 2020, Prison System, tshaonline.org.

<sup>46</sup> Donald R. Walker, "Penology for Profit: A History of the Texas Prison System, 1867-1912," Dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1983, 193-195.

In *American Prison*, Shane Bauer asserts that Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, and other southern states where the penitentiaries were destroyed during the Civil War, purchased plantations to replace the penitentiaries.<sup>47</sup>

*The Effect of Mass Incarceration on People of Color*

The history of the penal system in the United States aligns with the history of slavery in the United States. After the Emancipation Proclamation, African Americans expected to live the American dream as free American citizens. They had high hopes and great expectations for freedom, as they imagined their children having the privilege of freedom and opportunities they were denied.

However, when they demanded their rightful place in society, they were criminalized, demonized, and subjected to exclusionary and discriminatory laws that denied them their rightful place in society. Such representations are immortalized in popular culture and in films such as *The Birth of a Nation*, which justified violence against African Americans and the perceived need to incarcerate people of African descent.<sup>48</sup> Incarceration was a threat to the African American family. It would leave the mother and children unprotected, unprovided for, and susceptible and vulnerable to physical and sexual violence. The same threat of mass incarceration overshadowed the African American family at the onset of the war on drugs in the 1970s and persists today. Families and loved ones of the incarcerated are vulnerable to violence, financial

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<sup>47</sup> Shane Bauer, *American Prison: A Reporter's Undercover Journey into the Business of Punishment* (New York, NY: Penguin Press, 2018), 120-121.

<sup>48</sup> "Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent," United Nations General Assembly, Seventy-fourth session, Item 70 (b) of the provisional agenda, 2 August 2019, 5/22.

destabilization, and emotional turmoil. Children are denied the love and nurturing of the missing parent. The spouse or love interest is denied love and affection, resulting in emotional trauma.

According to the Equal Justice Initiative, the formal abolition of slavery did nothing to overcome the harmful ideas created to defend it, and so slavery did not end, it evolved.<sup>49</sup> It evolved into Jim Crow, segregation, redlining, denial of civil rights, inferior education for African American children, racial discrimination, unemployment, housing discrimination, and the list goes on. One of the most enduring stereotypes evolving from slavery that has harmed people of African descent is the association of blackness with criminality. As stated on the website of the Equal Justice Initiative:

These racial disparities in our criminal justice system are a legacy of our history of racial justice . . . Slavery evolved into convict leasing, whereby African Americans were arrested for ‘crimes’ like loitering and forced to work in white-owned businesses throughout the South. The decades of racial terror lynchings that followed slavery grafted onto the narrative of racial hierarchy a presumption of guilt and dangerousness, as whites defended vigilante violence against black people as necessary to protect their property, families, and the southern way of life from Black ‘criminals.’

The presumption of guilt and dangerousness assigned to people of African descent has made minority communities particularly vulnerable to the unfair administration of criminal justice.<sup>50</sup>

Slavery and forced servitude had a devastating effect on the African American family and community. Trauma was a way of life that included harsh labor from sunup to

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<sup>49</sup> “Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent,” United Nations General Assembly, Seventy-fourth session, Item 70 (b) of the provisional agenda, 2 August 2019, 5/22; and Equal Justice Initiative, “The Legacy Museum: from enslavement to mass incarceration,” <https://eji.org/legacy-museum>.

<sup>50</sup> “Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent,” United Nations General Assembly, Seventy-fourth session, Item 70 (b) of the provisional agenda, 2 August 2019, 15/22, and Equal Justice Initiative, “Presumption of guilt,” <https://eji.org/racial-justice/presumption-guilt>.

sundown. Severe punishment was often executed for any minor infraction. Family members were sold like livestock, and the harsh reality was that they might never be seen again. But what followed Emancipation, the Civil War, and Reconstruction was far more traumatic. The expectation of having the rights of free, American citizenship was quickly replaced with racism, violence, and denial of the full rights of a free American by the Ku Klux Klan, the White League, and other paramilitary organizations.

Incarceration has become a common, prevailing life event in African American, Hispanic, socioeconomically challenged, and other minority communities. Free Black women in the North, during the era of slavery, while working as domestics, were frequently incarcerated for larceny and received the harshest sentences in the criminal justice system. Historian Kali Nicole Gross states that Black women in Philadelphia constituted around fifty percent of the female prisoners, while Black men constituted approximately thirty percent of the male prisoners. Blacks comprised less than twenty-five percent of the city's population at that time.<sup>51</sup> The director of racial righteousness and reconciliation for the *Love Mercy Do Justice Initiative* of the Evangelical Covenant Church, Dominique DuBois Gilliard, writes that Illinois was notorious for its disproportionate incarceration rate of Blacks. By the 1960s, that number of Blacks incarcerated rose to extreme levels, when Black women made up seventy percent of female felons, and Black men made up forty-six percent of male felons. The state's statistics are not a sharp contrast from the national phenomena of mass incarceration of African Americans. Also noted is the fact the Black women, post-Emancipation, have

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<sup>51</sup> Kali Nicole Gross, "African American Women, Mass Incarceration, and the Politics of Protection," *Journal of American History* 102, no. 1 (2015): 25-33.



been continually arrested and incarcerated for practicing self-defense against physical and sexual violence.<sup>52</sup> By the mid-1990s, Marie Gottschalk reports that the combined incarceration (prison and jail) rate for adult males in the United States was nearly 7,000 per 100,000 compared to about 1,000 per 100,000 for adult white males. Today, three out of four prison admissions are either African American or Hispanic. Minority groups and the poor are disproportionately represented on death row. Black men in U.S. state and federal prisons are incarcerated at about five times the rate that Black men were incarcerated in South Africa in the early 1990s prior to the end of apartheid. Gottschalk further reports that it is predicted that about one in three Black males and one in six Hispanic males born today in the U.S. will serve some time behind bars. Too many young Black men are routinely forced to serve long terms of forced confinement and then live with the subsequent stigma of official criminality in all aspects of their social life as spouses, parents, workers, and returning citizens. The profound social exclusion they experience significantly undermines “the gains to citizenship hard-won by the civil rights movement.”<sup>53</sup>

The Nixon administration introduced the term “War on Drugs” to American politics. The Reagan administration escalated the war on drugs through an effective media blitz drawing bipartisan support for what they promoted as a critical political issue. First Lady Nancy Reagan hooked her wagon to the star as she proclaimed her mantra: “just say no!” Between the late 1980s and the late 1990s, the campaign was in full swing

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<sup>52</sup> Dominique Gilliard, *Rethinking Incarceration: advocating for justice that restores* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 29-30.

<sup>53</sup> Marie Gottschalk, *The Prison and the Gallows: The Politics of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 19.

as politicians took the stance to be “tough on crime.” The Clinton administration jumped on the political bandwagon to push the “tough on crime” agenda to voters. The Reagan administration militarized the police. SWAT teams and drug squads set up entrapment schemes and violently promoted drug raids by law enforcement using surveillance technology and enhanced weaponry primarily in the African American community.

Legislation expanding policing powers was critical to building the War on Drugs. In 1981, an amendment to the 103-year-old Posse Comitatus Act (which had forbidden using the military against American civilians) removed barriers that had prevented the National Guard from involvement in domestic policing. Militarization of SWAT squads was greatly accelerated by measures such as the 1033 Program, which allowed surplus Department of Defense equipment and weapons to be distributed free of charge to other government agencies. After 1989, when Congress passed legislation to make this redistribution possible, local law enforcement agencies aggressively grew their arsenals. Journalist Radley Balko reported that the Pentagon distributed 3,800 M-16s and 2,185 M-14s to civilian police agencies from 1995 to 1997 alone. Domestic police agencies also acquired bayonets, tanks, helicopters, and even airplanes. This military hardware fundamentally changed the way police carried out arrests. Police drug squads began to operate as if they were engaged in wartime military operations and Blacks were the enemy.<sup>54</sup>

The Reagan administration’s period of punitive legislation and prison expansion doubled the half-million prison population by the time he departed from the White House. The Reagan administration passed the 1984 Federal Sentencing Guidelines that laid the groundwork for expanded prosecutions and lengthy sentences, ensuring the continued growth of prisons and punishment. During Reagan’s final year, the House voted on an Anti-Drug Abuse Act, which expanded the use of the death penalty in drug cases and added a five-year mandatory minimum prison sentence for possession of cocaine base. The Clinton administration added insult to injury with his Omnibus Crime

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<sup>54</sup> James Kilgore, *Understanding Mass Incarceration: A People’s Guide to the Key Civil Rights Struggle of our Time* (New York, NY: The New Press, 2015), 63.

Bill of 1994 which allocated \$9.7 billion to prison construction and also opened the door to more participation by private corrections corporations<sup>55</sup> tantamount to post-Civil War convict leasing. By the time Clinton left office, there was an additional half-million added to the prison population; and the federal, state, and local corrections expenditures reached \$57 billion a year. Another detrimental piece of legislation was added that denied rights and opportunities for people with felony convictions. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 did away with federal college scholarships for people in prison and criminalized many survival strategies for people on federal assistance. Clinton also limited welfare to a maximum of five years and required welfare recipients to work.<sup>56</sup> Michael Tonry's book, *Sentencing Fragments: Penal Reform in America, 1975-2025*, states that during the era following the 1970s and 1980s, at the height of the war on drugs, penal reform produced unjust and overly severe laws, policies, and practices that greatly contributed to mass incarceration: three-strikes, life-without-parole, and mandatory minimum sentencing laws. Federal policies limited the use of community punishment and forbade judges to take into consideration offender drug or alcohol dependency, family responsibilities, disadvantaged childhoods, and employment records. These laws and policies primarily and unfairly targeted the minority population.<sup>57</sup> Representatives from all political parties believe these laws and policies are unfair and corrective measures need to be taken to correct and reverse mass incarceration.

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<sup>55</sup> Kilgore, *Understanding Mass Incarceration*, 31.

<sup>56</sup> Kilgore, *Understanding Mass Incarceration*, 32.

<sup>57</sup> Michael Tonry, *Sentencing Fragments: Penal Reform in America, 1975-2025* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2016), 1.

Michael Tonry further states that beginning in the 1990s, many jurisdictions began to reestablish rehabilitative programs. Drug, mental health, and other problem-solving courts came first, and in 2015, numbered in the thousands. Restorative justice, community justice, prisoner reentry, and new rehabilitative programs followed.<sup>58</sup> A disproportionate number of African Americans populate the US penal system. As of 2012, when African Americans made up thirteen percent of the US population, they made up forty percent of the prison and jail population.<sup>59</sup> Many major criminal justice reform organizations such as The Sentencing Project, the Vera Institute of Justice, and the Brennan Center are on board to reduce the excessive use of prison sentencing and have become engaged in criminal justice policy reform. Government officials and lawmakers acknowledge that mass incarceration ruins lives, produces broken families, robs people of their God-given potential, is inhumane, and weakens communities. They agree that the current criminal justice legislation is too severe and have initiated efforts to promote prison reform with the intent to fix a broken system and reverse mass incarceration.<sup>60</sup> The African American community is greatly affected by mass incarceration. Prison reform is urgently needed to promote the increase of resources for rehabilitation, decrease sentencing, and address the disproportionate incarceration of African Americans, Hispanics, the poor, and others.

Nancy Rodriguez's article, "Bridging the Gap between Research and Practice: The Role of Science in Addressing the Effects of Incarceration on Family Life," proposes

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<sup>58</sup> Michael Tonry, *Sentencing Fragments*, 4.

<sup>59</sup> Kilgore, *Understanding Mass Incarceration*, 14.

<sup>60</sup> Michael Tonry, *Sentencing Fragments*, 1-6.

four characteristics of focus in this article. Rodriguez cites four characteristics that she recommends for enhancing policy affecting crime, imprisonment, and family life:

- 1) Identify How Criminality Affects Families
- 2) Acknowledge That Family Systems Are Complex
- 3) Acknowledge That Family Relationships Are Not Static
- 4) Draw from the In-Prison Experience Literature

Rodriguez deems these characteristics relevant to criminal justice practitioners and feels that researchers should elaborate and disseminate them in order to provide and inform criminal justice practitioners with knowledge about the family life of the offenders prior to, during, and after incarceration that is relevant, legitimate, and accessible for more effective policies that pertain to how families receive support and how offenders navigate re-entry.<sup>61</sup> Rodriguez acknowledges that mass incarceration affects the most vulnerable sector of U.S. citizenship, specifically ethnic and racial minorities, the socioeconomically challenged, and high-crime communities where family dysfunction, over-policing, and violence are commonalities. Rodriguez further purports that in order for criminal justice practitioners to put effective policies and practices in place to address and mitigate the negative effects of incarceration on the incarcerated and the family and loved ones of the incarcerated, there must be an awareness of the nuances of family life, which may include antisocial behavior, drug and substance abuse, mental health concerns, physical or sexual abuse, as well as cultural and personal challenges responsible for a negative family environment.

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<sup>61</sup> Nancy Rodriguez, "Bridging the Gap between Research and Practice: The Role of Science in Addressing the Effects of Incarceration," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 665, no. 1 (May 2016): 231-240.

In relation to the nuances of the family life of the incarcerated and the vulnerability of the family of the incarcerated, Colita Nichols Fairfax's article, "The Need To Be: Since 1619, Trauma and Anti-Blackness," adds the perspective of the impact of anti-Blackness violence and trauma on African Americans, both historically and contemporarily. There is a need for a nuanced analysis of the violence, horror, and trauma inflicted on African American by slaveowners and the institution of slavery. The following is revealed in Fairfax's historical discourse:

- 1) The historic evidence of anti-Black cultural violence,
- 2) Contemporary human conditions that exemplify anti-Black cultural violence,
- 3) Responses of healthy cultural practices that are parlayed into best practices for the reader to consider.<sup>62</sup>

The peculiar American institution of slavery has yet to be properly framed in the history of this great nation. It has been said of historical trauma: "it connects histories of group-experienced traumatic events to present day experiences and contexts, including the contemporary health of a group or community" (Mohatt et al, 2014, 130). When this traumatic history is appropriately addressed, healing of the African American community and family can begin. It has also been said that "The trauma associated with slavery is unique, because it has yet to be accepted as having had profound implications" (Wilkins et al, 2014, 14).

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<sup>62</sup> Colita Nichol Fairfax, "The Need To Be: Since 1619, Trauma and Anti-Blackness," *Phylon* (1960-) 57, no. 1, Special Volume: Devoted to Celebrating the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Africans in the United States (SUMMER 2020): 57.

## **Conclusion**

There is a distinctive difference in the prison system prior to the Emancipation Proclamation. However, a recent awareness of the devastation of mass incarceration on the African American, Hispanic, Native American, and socioeconomic communities has given rise to talk of prison reform.

In review, the foundation of the U. S. penal system was clearly modeled after the European penal system. The prison was a temporary holding place until punishment was executed. European and U. S. prison reformers advocated for more humane facilities and conditions to house criminals as they completed their sentences as they intended to do away with capital punishment except for the most heinous crimes.

The Northern model for prisons became known as penitentiaries and were defined as a place of penitence, a place for the prisoner to do penance for their crime and have a new lease on life upon completing their sentence. The reformers saw prison as a place of rehabilitation and reformation. Upon release, the prisoner was expected to return to society as a renewed citizen with better morals and good work ethics. Part of the rehabilitation included Christian studies from the Bible. The U. S. Northern model of the penitentiary was designed to provide the prisoner with quiet time to reflect on their transgression and seek penitence for wrongdoings and to provide the prisoners work skills to develop discipline and learn a trade or skill so they could contribute to society upon completion of their sentence and release.

The Southern penitentiary model was designed to provide a more punitive setting for the prisoners. Christian counseling and studies, which were available in the northern facilities, were non-existence in the southern facilities, and Bibles were rarely available.

After the Civil War, the prison population exploded with the influx of African American freedmen and those recently emancipated from slavery. African Americans were essentially re-enslaved per an exception clause within the Thirteenth Amendment. Whipping, deprivation of food, and torture were the means of punishment in southern penitentiaries. There were few skilled workers, and most were subject to hard labor from sun-up to sundown. The convicts were leased out to the railroad, farmers, and other industries for a fee paid to the state penitentiaries. The northern states abolished slavery on a gradual basis before the Emancipation of slavery. Thomas Eddy, a New York banker, convinced the legislature to fund a new penitentiary at Auburn complete with a factory. Fifteen years after slavery was abolished, one in five New York prisoners would be Black — their representation behind bars nearly ten times greater than it was in the population at large.<sup>63</sup> The foundation for the U. S. penal system was developed in the early nineteenth century.

In summary, the growing trend in prison privatization by corporations such as the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) and the GEO Group are not new to the prison industry; but they are, in a sense, a revitalization of convict leasing that thrived in the nineteenth century. The U.S. prison population remained somewhat static between 1920 and 1970.

After a fluctuation in the U.S. prison population in the mid to early twentieth century, the prison population began to rise at an alarming rate from the early 1970s through the 2010s even though the crime rate was rather static. A major factor contributing to the growth of the prison population was the ‘war on drugs’ and the ‘tough on crime’ propaganda. It was a substantial cost to fund the housing of over a million prisoners in recent years. Remember the Clinton administration

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<sup>63</sup> Bauer, *American Prison*, 59.



allocated \$57 billion for federal, state, and local corrections expenditures. Today 80 to 100 billion per year is allocated to the US penal system.<sup>64</sup>

It is egregious and unfathomable to imagine the number of taxpayer dollars allotted to the U.S. penal system in comparison to the amount that is “not” allotted to education through public schools and universities.

In their book *The Punishment Imperative: The Rise and Failure of Mass Incarceration in America*, Todd Clear and Natasha Frost argue that a key shift in criminal justice philosophy occurred after 1980. In previous decades, the dominant ethos in criminal legal circles was the goal of rehabilitation. Prison, jails, and juvenile justice facilities were viewed as institutions that provided people with a ‘second chance,’ often through extensive education and job training programs or substance abuse treatments. With the rise of mass incarceration, however, attitudes began to change. Gradually the proponents of mass incarceration and the general public began to call for the system to punish or incapacitate people rather than rehabilitate them. The sense was that prisoners were ‘criminals’ who because they had broken the law, didn’t deserve further investment or a second chance. Clear and Frost called this the punishment imperative — a popular urge to respond to a perceived threat of crime in a punitive manner.<sup>65</sup>

A statement by the Vera Institute of Justice outlines their response to the call for an end to mass incarceration that has grown significantly in the past few years:

Today, there is bipartisan recognition at both the state and federal level that our over-reliance on incarceration is in need of recalibration. The imperative to maintain low crime rates without imposing unnecessary burdens on communities or taxpayers is pronounced.<sup>66</sup>

The US penal system, especially the trend toward mass incarceration, has an enormous effect on the African American, Latino, Native American, and poor rural white population. Although most men suffer incarceration, the community and family they

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<sup>64</sup> Schneur Zalman Newfield interviews Todd R. Clear on New Books Network, April 8, 2022. This interview was on the book by Todd R. Clear and Natasha A. Frost, *The Punishment Imperative: The Rise and Failure of Mass Incarceration in America* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2013).

<sup>65</sup> Kilgore, *Understanding Mass Incarceration*, 21-22.

<sup>66</sup> Kilgore, *Understanding Mass Incarceration*, 219.

leave behind are adversely affected. The men who are incarcerated are some mother's son, some wife's husband, some child's father, someone's brother, uncle, cousin, lover, or friend. The women left on the outside are the main supporters of the incarcerated loved ones. They provide financial support for the family and care for and nurture the children and other family members; they also support the incarcerated loved one by providing money for their commissary, phone calls, books, and setting up, scheduling, and transportation for visits. The women receive phone calls to comfort, encourage, and inspire their incarcerated loved ones, and they listen to the madness their loved ones often have to endure on the inside. When the men who are incarcerated are released and seek re-entry into the community of their loved ones, the women on the outside are primarily the ones who provide or refer the resources and assistance required for re-entry: housing, food, clothing, supervision, job searching assistance, emotional, spiritual, and mental health support, and yes, financial support also. This Historical Foundations chapter informs the doctoral project. The family and loved ones of the incarcerated are being taken into consideration regarding the problem of mass incarceration as the doctoral project proposed to develop a support group forum that will include the context and collaborating community agencies in a request to hear their concerns and requirements. The conclusion of the Historical Foundations warrants further exploration moving forward to the Theological Foundations.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

This Theological Foundations chapter will examine designated theological themes associated with the Doctor of Ministry project within the ministry context of the Mount Carmel United Holy Church, Dayton, Ohio, and the surrounding community which is applicable to the families and loved ones affected by the growing prison population affecting the Dayton area, specifically, the African Americans community.

*Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines theology as the study of religious faith, practice, and experience, especially the study of God and of God's relation to the world.<sup>1</sup> Theology promotes the worship of God as the Divine Creator and the study and application of the teachings of God and warns of the adversary of God.

A person's individual theology is often based on the structure of the church or the church organization. The theology of the Christian church is based on creeds, codes, and affirmations developed centuries ago by councils of church representatives and theologians. Three major creedal documents that are vital to the Christian church and its theological foundation are the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed. Larry Hart, in his book *Truth Aflame: Theology for the Church in Renewal*, states the following:

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<sup>1</sup> *Merriam Webster's Dictionary*, s.v., "theology," <https://www.merriam-webster.com>.

Though not authored by the twelve apostles (its present form dating from about A.D. 700), The Apostles' Creed clearly reflects the apostolic tradition of the New Testament. Historically, as with all the major creeds, it has been used (1) as a confession of faith at baptism, (2) as a pattern for teaching the Christian faith, (3) as a 'rule of faith' against heresies, and (4) as means of confession in corporate worship. Once again, we are reminded that the Christian faith is creedal; it is theological by its very nature.<sup>2</sup>

The Nicene Creed briefly describes the Catholic church's profession of faith or credo.

The Athanasian Creed can be described as a brief handbook of faith for the Western church.

In many local churches, an affirmation of faith is recited every Sunday before service begins. It is an affirmation of the church body's theological foundation. Creeds, affirmations (along with pastoral guidance), attending church service, Bible Study, and fellowship develop individual theology and build individual faith. Theology helps believers exercise their gifts and provides the foundation for the church body. The late Dale Moody asserts, "A Christian theology is an effort to think coherently about the basic beliefs that create a community of faith around the person of Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup> The creeds and affirmations are from theology that is essential to defending and preserving the faith and addressing worldly philosophies and challenges in any given era of church history:

Emil Brunner may have been the first theologian to identify the roots of theology that emerged from this upheaval. Brunner argued that 'three urgent necessities' for theology 'which spring from the life of the Church itself' made the theological enterprise vital for the church's ongoing mission.<sup>4</sup> He named these three roots the

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<sup>2</sup> Larry D. Hart, *Truth Aflame: Theology for the Church in Renewal* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999, 2005), 28.

<sup>3</sup> Dale Moody, *The Word of Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 1, in Larry D. Hart, *Truth Aflame: Theology for the Church in Renewal* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 19.

<sup>4</sup> Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of God*, trans. Olive Wyon (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1950), 9.

polemical, the exegetical, and the catechetical.<sup>5</sup> As Dale Moody ably summarized: 'The first was to refute false Christians before and after baptism.'<sup>6</sup>

Brunner further describes the need to correct false teaching:

The sinful self-will of man takes the Gospel – at first imperceptibly, and indeed perhaps unconsciously – and alters the content and the meaning of the message of Jesus Christ and His Mighty Act of Redemption, of the Kingdom of God and the destiny of Man. This process produces 'substitute' Gospels, introduces 'foreign bodies' into Christian truth, and distorts the Christian message: the very words of the Bible are twisted, and given an alien meaning, and indeed, one which is directly opposed to its purpose. The Christian church is in danger of exchanging its divine treasury of truth for mere human inventions.<sup>7</sup>

Through the theological lens of soteriology and theological anthropology, the theological themes of pastoral theology, Black liberation theology, and womanist theology will address how the alteration of the Gospel was used to distort the Christian message to enslave and oppress African Americans and how the Gospel can subsequently be used to restore and uplift the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.

### **An Overview and Relatedness of Chosen Theological Themes**

The chosen theological themes will be examined through the lens of the theological doctrines of soteriology and theological anthropology. The theological doctrine of soteriology speaks to the spiritual condition of man. Those women and family members who care for their incarcerated loved ones need to be uplifted and strengthened through prayer and support. True rehabilitation for their loved ones can be found in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the gospel of Jesus Christ can also strengthen and build up the

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<sup>5</sup> Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of God*, 9-11, 93-96.

<sup>6</sup> Moody, *The Word of Truth*, 11; Hart, *Truth Aflame*, 30.

<sup>7</sup> Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of God*, 9.

family as they support their incarcerated loved ones. Soteriology is the healing answer for the brokenness incarceration inflicts on the family and loved ones of those who are incarcerated, as well as the answer for the incarcerated individual to find grace, atonement, and true freedom. The theological theme of soteriology speaks to the spiritual condition of man. Once a man or woman completes their prison sentence, they can theoretically reenter society as a law-abiding citizen of the United States of America. They have fulfilled the legal time specified to pay for their crime and are anxious to experience the freedom of reentry. However, being released from prison does not release them from their sinful nature. The word of God states, “So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36 KJV). In our pericope, Luke 4:18-19, the Spirit of the Lord is upon Jesus as He states his mission. He has been sent to proclaim release to the captives. His ministry and mission are to let the oppressed go free! Jesus’ mission is to set man free from sin and to deliver man from spiritual bondage. Man can be freed from the prison system, but what man really needs is freedom from sin, guilt, and shame. Jesus is the only one who can provide this freedom through salvation. The family and loved ones of the incarcerated who suffer from a broken heart can find solace in the what the chosen theologies offer. Man has been able to discover cures for many diseases and ailments, but only God can mend a broken heart.

Man can be freed from the prison system, but still be prone to sin and immoral tendencies. What the returning citizen needs is freedom from their sinful nature. They need a renewed mind to make better decisions and the fortitude to live a fruitful life. Following the same tendencies will yield the same results. The family and loved one of the incarcerated need the care offered through pastoral theology to strengthen their faith.

They may also need salvation or need to be informed through a support group forum provided through the doctoral project. The Lord is the only one Who can provide salvation. In the gospel of St. John, The Lord Jesus, Son of the Living God, is speaking to the Jews who believed in him; however, the passage is applicable to the incarcerated as well as to the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.

If ye continue in my word, then ye are my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (KJV)<sup>8</sup>

Charles “Chuck” Colson, a Nixon-era politician, found himself in prison due to his ties to the Watergate scandal.<sup>9</sup> His Christian faith and his prison term served as a factor in the creation of a prison discipleship program known as the Prison Fellowship. Chuck Colson states that he and a few friends developed the idea for Prison Fellowship because God had been at work in his heart. Before forming the Prison Fellowship, he said he studied the problem of the alarming growth of the prisoner population. At the beginning of the study, in partnership with nearly thirty other Christian ministries, they conceded to the conventional wisdom that poverty, environment, broken families, racism, and the like were indicators of crime that landed individuals in prison. However, they concluded, after seventeen years of studying prisoners, that people making wrong moral choices landed them in prison. He states his theory was confirmed by a mid-1980s Harvard study by James Q. Wilson and Richard Herrnstein, concluding the following:<sup>10</sup>

that crime is caused by a lack of moral teaching during the morally formative years. They found no correlation between crime and race, poverty, or anything else people usually associate as a cause of crime.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> John 8:31-32, KJV.

<sup>9</sup> John Perry, *God Behind Bars* (Nashville, TN: W. Publishing Group, 2006), inside cover.

<sup>10</sup> Perry, *God Behind Bars*, ix-x.

<sup>11</sup> Perry, *God Behind Bars*, x.

Steven Rempe, in his article for Prison Fellowship, quotes religion professor, Stephen H. Webb as follow:

‘Several years of prison ministry have convinced me that there are substantial parallels between what we think about incarceration and how we understand salvation.’ ‘I am convinced that the crisis of faith in America today cannot be resolved apart from the reformation in our understanding of prisons,’ Webb concludes. ‘If we do not know what role punishment plays for those convicted of crimes, how can we claim to understand what penance is for souls guilty of sin? Now more than ever we need to rethink the connection between showing mercy to trespassers and seeking forgiveness for our own trespasses. Revival will come to America when Christians begin doing justice to the American prison system.’<sup>12</sup>

For what does the Lord require? Micah 6:8 (CSB/NKJV) tells us what the Lord requires of us: “to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God!”

Romans 3:23 KJV states, “For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” Salvation is available for all through the atoning sacrifice that Jesus Christ provided through his shed blood on Calvary’s cross. Chuck Colson states crime is caused by a lack of moral teaching. The lack of moral teaching may be instrumental in causing a person to commit crimes; however, some with moral teaching and Christian backgrounds are also committing criminal acts. In addition, the criminal justice system has developed racist laws and policies aimed at and target the African American community. The war on drugs, the war on crime, harsher sentencing, and militarizing the police are a few examples. Substantial portions of the African American community are not able to afford legal representation, legal fees, and fines to prevent jail time and incarceration. Salvation is a solution for social ills and moral depravity, and prison reform is a solution for mass incarceration.

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<sup>12</sup> Steve Rempe, “Incarceration and Salvation,” *Prison Fellowship*, September 3, 2014.



Chuck Colson's theory that there is "no correlation between crime and race, poverty, or anything else people usually associate as a cause of crime" does not stand up to the fact that there "is" a relation between the criminal justice and racism in the African American community. Our Lord Jesus spent most of his earthly ministry with the poor, marginalized, and oppressed in society. He came to bind up the broken-hearted; the women and families with incarcerated loved ones are broken-hearted. Salvation is essential to all who would desire to have a changed life. Repentance from sin is essential for salvation. This is a fact for the incarcerated as well as for everyone. Soteriology will be the theological lens through which we examine pastoral theology and minjung theology.

Theological anthropology will be the theological lens through which Black liberation theology and womanist theology are examined. Theological anthropology, the doctrine of humanity, has its foundation in Genesis 1:27:

So, God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female (CSB).

From this passage of scripture, we are given the revelation of creation, and it reveals that man was created in the image and likeness of God. There is no distinction of race or gender; he created male and female in his image. This doctrine of humanity is known as *imago Dei*. There is a recognized conflict between human dignity, as affirmed in *imago Dei*, and European Christianity that condones colonization of South Africans and American Christianity that acquiesces to slavery-like practices via mass incarceration which condones racism via silent consent. Both so-called Christian empires promoted racialized segregation and enacted laws that promoted political and economic oppression against Blacks. Alan Boesak, of South Africa, writes, "Racism denies the liberating,

humanizing, reconciling work of Christ, the promised One who has taken human form, thereby affirming human worth in the sight of God.<sup>13</sup> Frederick Douglass, on behalf of four million slaves, boldly repudiated all narrow articulations of human dignity in the name of Christianity in public speech for practicing a religion that turned a blind eye to slavery in America.<sup>14</sup> To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord (Luke 4:19, NASB) references the year of Jubilee when all debts were forgiven, and slaves were set free.

Michelle Gonzalez states, “Creation in the image of God implies that we human beings have a supernatural orientation toward the sacred and that all of humanity shares in this common nature.”<sup>15</sup> Mankind was created for God’s glory and not for generational servitude and perpetual oppression.

### **Theology Themes**

The first theological theme chosen for review is pastoral theology, which is associated with practical theology by many, but not all theologians. Where most theological themes are steeped in theological theories and discussions, pastoral theology is concerned with the practical application of theology through preaching, teaching, and reaching the people with the word and message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is a stereologically driven approach to ministry. In *Pastoral Theology: Theological*

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<sup>13</sup> Allan Boesak, *If This is Treason, I Am Guilty* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987), 23.

<sup>14</sup> Paul Martens and Wemimo Jaiyesimi, “The Recovery of Human Dignity in Protestant Christianity and Its Ethical Implications,” *Religions* 14 (2023): 425, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14030425>.

<sup>15</sup> Michelle A. Gonzalez, “Created for God and for Each Other: Our Imago Dei,” *T&T CLARK HANDBOOK OF THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY*, ed. Mary Ann Hinsdale and Stephen Okey (London, UK: T&T Clark, 2021), 62.

*Foundation for Who a Pastor is and What a Pastor does*, the authors define pastoral theology as follows:

Pastoral Theology establishes a theological framework for ministry that is biblically derived, *historically* informed, doctrinally sound, missionally engaged, philosophically deliberate, and contextually relevant.<sup>16</sup>

The second theological theme briefly reviewed but relevant to the doctoral project is minjung theology. America was entering the civil rights era in the mid-1960s, and Korea was entering a phase of minjung theology in the 1970s. Minjung theology literally means “people’s theology.”

The third theological theme introduced is Black theology of liberation. In the African American church and community, pastoral theology entails ministering to oppressed and marginalized people; therefore, pastoral theology in the African American church and community relates to Black liberation theology. In his book, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, James H. Cone states the following:

In view of the biblical emphasis on liberation, it seems not only appropriate but necessary to define the Christian community as the community of the oppressed which joins Jesus Christ in his fight for the liberation of humankind. The task of theology, then, is to explicate the meaning of God’s liberating activity so that those who labor under enslaving powers will see the forces of liberation are the very activity of God . . . God’s activity on behalf of the oppressed.<sup>17</sup>

The fourth and final theological theme is womanist theology. The plight of the African American woman in the United States of America has been to live a life of double jeopardy. The African American woman is jeopardized for being of African American descent. She has a legacy of slavery, hardship, and trauma. The African

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<sup>16</sup> Daniel L. Akin and R. Scott Pace, *Pastoral Theology: Theological Foundations for Who a Pastor Is and What He Does* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2017), 20.

<sup>17</sup> James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, Fiftieth Anniversary Edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2020), 3.

American woman is also jeopardized for being a woman. She is subject to double discrimination, disenfranchisement, and marginalization. She is an African American woman in a society that created a constitution that was designed for White male supremacy. Womanist theology examines the plight of African American women and searches the scriptures to address the cause and effect while seeking a solution.

These four theological themes inform the doctoral project. Pastoral theology lends itself to the family's need for someone to walk along with them through the process of having a family member incarcerated. It speaks to the family's need to have spiritual guidance to process their grief and encourage them throughout the incarceration process and duration. Minjung theology brings to light the stigmatization and oppression present in the criminal justice system and the burdens society places on the backs of the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. Black liberation theology is the means for the family of the incarcerated to address the effect of mass incarceration on the African American community and to promote social justice. Womanist theology gives voice to the mothers, wives, fiancés, aunts, sisters, daughters, lovers, all females, and all other family members who are the main supporters of incarcerated males, and it also gives voice to the incarcerated female population.

### **Pastoral Theology**

Pastoral theology is viewed through the lens of soteriology, which is a part of theology dealing with the spiritual condition of man and his need for salvation. Pastoral theology is rooted in caring relationships. Pastoral theology provides the basis for pastoral care for the contextual community through theological practice and presentation.

The pericope for the Doctor of Ministry project embodies the scriptural foundation for pastoral theology:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor, He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.<sup>18</sup>

There are myriad resources to describe pastoral theology; however, the scriptural passage of Luke 4:18-19 provides three areas of pastoral theology for the focus of the theological foundation. These three areas of focus are the Spirit of God as essential to spirituality, the word of God, and the pastoral care and ethnographic emphasis in pastoral ministry.

The first focus area of discussion is the Spirit of God. The Spirit of the Lord was present and at work at the onset of Jesus' earthly ministry. The Spirit gave confirmation to Jesus at His baptism in the district around the Jordan River when the heavens were open, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in the form of a dove. Then a voice came from heaven declaring Jesus as God's beloved son. The voice from heaven proclaimed, "I am well pleased" (Luke 3, NASB). Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit when He returned from the Jordan and was led into the wilderness by the Spirit. He was tempted by the devil, but did not give an earthly, fleshly, or emotional response. He responded with spiritual wisdom. Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit to embark upon His earthly ministry (Luke 4, NASB). This same present and active Spirit of the Lord is available and imperative for pastoral theology issues and practice today. The power and anointing of the Spirit of the Lord are essential to the ministry and practice of pastoral theology.

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<sup>18</sup> Luke 4:18-19, NASB.

Looking at the role of pastoral theology and the pastoral theologian in the navigation of the methodology and practice of addressing authentic spirituality reveals several interpretations of the concept of spirituality. Marie McCarthy, in her contribution to *The Journal of Pastoral Theology*, explores the definition of spirituality, including explicit references to God that do not contradict basic tradition and understanding of God. Thus, it provides verification that solidifies and contextualizes these understandings.

Thus, the Orthodox tradition might define spirituality as, ‘a person’s life and activity in relationship to God, and to oneself, other people and all things in reference to God’ (Hopko, 1990, p. 1221). A Roman Catholic author defines spirituality as the ‘radical drive of the person toward self-transcending authenticity in knowing, naming, and loving the Other. Spirituality is the lived quality of a person *qua* person’ (Richard, 2000, p. 71). A Presbyterian group working on a project in congregation revitalization speaks of spirituality as ‘the intentional committed practice of spiritual disciplines, both personal and corporate, through which God’s spirit may enlighten the minds, cleanse the hearts, and renew the lives of people of faith.’<sup>19</sup> And The Christian Church, Disciple of Christ, in a renewal project that aims at deepening the spirituality of Congregations through deepening the spiritual experience of Church leaders, Regional Ministers, and Pastors, speaks of authentic spirituality as ‘listening to and following God’s lead, letting go and trusting in God’s movement in our individual, congregational, and denominational lives.’<sup>20</sup>

The latter definition of spirituality speaks of authentic spirituality as “listening to and following God’s lead, letting go and trusting in God’s movement in our individual, congregational, and denominational lives.” This understanding of spirituality is close to the concept relayed in Luke in the events leading up to the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry.

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<sup>19</sup> Marie McCarthy, “Spirituality, Pastoral Theology and the Pastoral Theologian,” eds. Joretta Marshall and John Patton, *The Journal of Pastoral Theology* 12, no. 1 (January 2002): 2.

<sup>20</sup> McCarthy, “Spirituality, Pastoral Theology and the Pastoral Theologian,” 2.

The second area of focus for discussion is the Word of God. An overview of pastoral theology and the pastoral theologian as it relates to the Word of God is alluded to as follows:

Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding.<sup>21</sup>

The word “shepherd” originates from the Old Testament Hebrew word *ra’a* and is translated to shepherd, pastor, herdsman, and keeper of the flock. The verbal form also means to pasture, to feed, to rule. The word shepherd also conveys teach, lead, guide, and protect.<sup>22</sup>

Another scripture passage that enforces the Word of God in pastoral theology is as follows:

And he gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints, for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.<sup>23</sup>

The church is the major artery of pastoral theology through which flows the Word of God and the ministry of the Spirit. This is evident in the preaching, expounding, and dissecting of the Word of God for teaching, correction, exhortation, and ultimately salvation. All over the United States of America and worldwide, there are Wednesday, Tuesday, or Thursday evening Bible studies being conducted. There are small group sessions, conferences, and revivals declaring the Word of God. And finally, there is Sunday morning worship offering salvation through the preached Word of God. It takes

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<sup>21</sup> Jeremiah 3:15, NASB.

<sup>22</sup> Blueletterbible.org, s.v., “shepherd,” blueletterbible.com.

<sup>23</sup> Ephesians 4: 11-12, NASB.

all of these attributes of pastoral theology to equip the saints for the work of service and to build up the body of Christ, which is the church.

The third and final focus area for pastoral theology is pastoral care and ethnography. Mary Clark Moschella introduces her article, “Food, Faith, and Formation: A Case Study on the use of ethnography in Pastoral Theology and Care,” with a quote from the following quote:

Pastoral theology is critical phenomenology, studying a living and acting faith community in order to excavate and examine the norms which inhabit pastoral praxis.<sup>24</sup>

The doctoral project will endeavor to excavate and examine the norms of the families and loved ones of the incarcerated through the development of a support group forum using ethnographic interviews. Elaine Graham’s statement that “Pastoral theology is critical phenomenology” is suggestive of a metaphor for ethnography. Robert Sokolowski, author of *Introduction to Phenomenology*, states, “This book presents the major philosophical doctrines of phenomenology in a clear, lively style with an abundance of examples. The book examines such phenomena as perception, pictures, imagination, memory, language, and reference and shows how human thinking arises from experience.”<sup>25</sup> Mary Clark Moschella further elaborates:

In her book, *Transforming Practice: Pastoral Theology in an Age of Uncertainty*, Elaine Graham suggests that pastoral theologians who are striving to incorporate the insights of post-modernism, especially as it highlights the importance of historical and cultural contexts, might ‘turn to practice as the focus of contemporary pastoral theology’ (1996, p. 96). Graham recommends this

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<sup>24</sup> Mary Clark Moschella, “Food, Faith, and Formation: A Case Study on the Use of Ethnography in Pastoral Theology and Care,” eds. Joretta Marshall and John Patton, *The Journal of Pastoral Theology* 12, no. 1 (January 2002): 75; in Elaine Graham, *Transforming Practice: Pastoral Theology in an Age of Uncertainty* (London, UK: Mowbray, 1996), 140.

<sup>25</sup> Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), inside cover.



methodological move because she believes that religious practice is the site where social relations and religious values are expressed, enacted, and/or brought into being. She therefore calls pastoral theologians to a phenomenological mode of inquiry, through which the values that are embedded in action can be discerned and interpreted (1996, p. 209). Like Graham, I believe that religious practice is a critical site that merits the careful observation and attention of pastoral theologians. I also find compelling John Patton's claim that ethnography can contribute to the pastoral care task of 'remembering' the particular story of a group of people (Patton, 1993, pp. 43-45). I put these two things together – the focus on practice with the use of ethnography – as a basic method for pastoral theology. This approach suits my understanding of pastoral theology as constructive theology that emerges in the context of caring relationships. In this article, I will make use of a case study to demonstrate some of the ways in which 'studying a living and acting faith-community' (Graham, 1996, p. 140) can illuminate pastoral theology and care.<sup>26</sup>

Moschella emphasizes the practice and use of ethnography as a method of pastoral theology that contributes to the pastoral care task of engaging a particular faith community.

Through personal interviews and observations, in combination with historical, social, and pastoral analysis, I gained access to theological understandings of the people — their embodied knowledge of God, themselves, and their faith worlds.<sup>27</sup>

Moschella offers her thoughts on hospitality in pastoral theology and how food is often included in ethnographic encounters. Jesus was especially inclined to include a good meal in his ministerial encounters. Good food and a good cup of coffee or tea are a natural way to share and connect in pastoral care.

A major social setting in the ministry of Jesus in the gospel of Luke is the table fellowship enjoyed through sharing a meal. The meal scene in the gospel of Luke is often highlighted throughout Jesus' ministry where He is invited to a meal, present at a meal, or preparing to attend a meal.

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<sup>26</sup> Moschella, *Food, Faith, and Formation*, 76.

<sup>27</sup> Moschella, *Food, Faith, and Formation*, 76.

Immediately after Jesus called Levi, the tax collector, to follow him, Levi gave a banquet for Jesus. For the first time, we hear the charge that Jesus eats and drinks ‘with tax collectors and sinners’ (5:29-32). In chapter 7, Simon the Pharisee invites Jesus to a meal at his house, where a sinful woman weeps at Jesus’ feet and anoints the (7:36-50). When the crowds follow Jesus to a deserted place, Jesus feeds the multitude with five loaves and two fish (9:12-17). When another Pharisee invites Jesus to a meal Jesus . . . castigat[es] the Pharisees for being more concerned about washing the outside of vessels than about inner purity (11:37-52). In chapter 14 Jesus is again invited to the house of a leader of the Pharisees (14:1-24). This time he challenges the guests to take the lower seats rather than the seats of honor and then admonishes the host not to invite friends and relatives to a dinner but to invite ‘the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind’ (14:11). The parable of the great banquet follows (14:15-24).<sup>28</sup>

The table becomes the meeting place to connect and commemorate socially significant occasions. The table becomes the place of promise to Jesus’ disciples where they will eat and drink at Jesus’ table in the kingdom. At the communion table, the bread becomes the broken body of Jesus, and the cup becomes the new covenant in Jesus’ blood, and the Lord’s Supper is received in observance of the Lord’s death until He comes again. At the table truths are taught, scriptures are expounded, instructions are received, and fellowship and friendships are forged.

Finally, David Kirk Beedon, in his thesis “Hope Deferred, Humanity Diminished? An ethnographic inquiry into the improvement of pastoral care offered to those serving an indeterminate sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP),” offers for consideration seven core values to approach ethnography. The seventh value is as follows:

Ethnography is hermeneutical. From my experience as a chaplain (and previously as a parish priest) I knew that to care pastorally for a person entailed having some understanding of them that was more than superficial. It is crucial for pastoral attentiveness to have a sense of what it is like to ‘walk in their shoes’. The

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<sup>28</sup> R. Alan Culpepper, *The Gospel of Saint Luke*, in *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary*, Volume Nine, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 26.

interviewing method employed facilitated the inhabiting of participants' life narratives.<sup>29</sup>

A pastoral theology that engages pastoral care through ethnography and has a foundation in the written and spoken word of God will produce authentic spirituality available to the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. This kind of pastoral theology will inform the Doctor of Ministry project as it will support, uplift, and provide resources for the loved ones of those incarcerated.

### *Minjung Theology*

Korea entered a phase of minjung theology in the 1970s. Minjung theology was born out of the suffering of the Korean working poor. Historically, Korea had suffered economic and political discrimination due to foreign occupation by Japan, a split between North and South Korea, and political instability following Korea's liberation. The socioeconomic and sociopolitical divide between the elite and the working poor caused economic underdevelopment, forced labor, discrimination, sexual slavery, and genocide.

<sup>30</sup> Two prominent minjung theologians are Nam-Dong Suh and Byung-Mu Ahn. As one of the leading minjung theologians, Suh puts the main emphasis of his work in theology on the historical experience of the people.<sup>31</sup> Ahn's theological methodology advocates for

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<sup>29</sup> David Kirk Beedon, "Hope Deferred, Humanity Diminished? An ethnographic enquiry into the improvement of pastoral care offered to those serving an indeterminate sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP)," A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of Doctor of Practical Theology, March 2020.

<sup>30</sup> Andres Eungi Kim and Jongman Kim, "Minjung Theology," *St. Andrews Encyclopaedia of Theology*, ed Brendan N. Wolfe et al., 2003, 3, <https://www.saet.ac.uk/Christianity/MinjungTheology>.

<sup>31</sup> Kim and Kim "Minjung Theology," 10.

the people at the bottom of the social ladder, such as the poor, the weak, and the socially marginalized, who are being abused and persecuted.<sup>32</sup>

Minjung theology undergirds this doctoral project which examines the needs and concerns of the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. As mass incarceration has been explored, it tends to identify the family and loved ones of the incarcerated as a marginalized and stigmatized section of society. As minjung theology evolved in the 1970s, it challenged traditional Korean Protestantism, which did not acknowledge social justice and the concerns of the poor and oppressed.<sup>33</sup> Minjung is a Korean word whose root is derived from two Chinese characters. “*Min*” means “people” and “*jung*” means “mass.” Thus, “minjung” means “mass of people”<sup>34</sup> or the people’s theology. The minjung are the people who have been politically oppressed, economically exploited, socially alienated, culturally despised, and/or religiously rejected. These are the people of *han*.<sup>35</sup> *Han* is an Asian, particularly Korean, term used to describe the depths of human suffering.<sup>36</sup> Minjung theology formulated through the lens of soteriology is counterintuitive to the fact that soteriology concentrates on repentance from sin as being

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<sup>32</sup> Kim and Kim, “Minjung Theology,” 11.

<sup>33</sup> Ilmok Kim, “A Critical Analysis of the Relationship Between Salvation and Social Justice in the Minjung Theology,” 2008, *Dissertation*, 2008, 2, <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dissertations/2>. See David Kwang-sun Suh, “Korean Theological Development in the 1970s,” in *Minjung Theology: People as the Subject of History*, ed. The Commission on theological Concerns of the Christian Conference as Asia (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983) 38-43.

<sup>34</sup> Kim, “A Critical Analysis of the Relationship Between Salvation and Social Justice in the Minjung Theology,” 3; Sung-joon Park, “Re-examining a Theology of Minjung: In Pursuit of a New Horizon in the Understanding of ‘Minjung,’” in *Vitality of East Asian Christianity: Challenges to Mission and Theology in Japan*, ed. Hidetoshi Watanabe, Keiichi Kaneko, and Megumi Yoshida (Delhi, India: Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (ISPCK), 2004), 267-299.

<sup>35</sup> Tong Hwan Moon, “Korean Minjung Theology,” unpublished paper, 1982 (typewritten).

<sup>36</sup> Andrew Sung Park, *The Wounded Heart of God: The Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993), 15.

the major way to salvation; however, it does not regard the “*han*” of the victims of sin. Minjung advocates for those who have been sinned against but have not been given consideration for their suffering from oppression, exploitation, and injustice. Although minjung theology originated in Korea, it is applicable to all people who seek social justice. The African American community has endured oppression, exploitation, and injustice since the Emancipation Proclamation. Laws were enacted to dehumanize, subjugate, and re-enslave those freed from slavery. This oppression resulted in a criminal justice system that produced mass incarceration in the African American community. The families and loved ones of the incarcerated suffer economic and social suppression because of this injustice. They have suffered the *han* from generations of cultural trauma.

The family and loved ones of the incarcerated are the invisible victims in the criminal justice system. Their *han* is apparent in that they are sometimes isolated, ostracized, and unable to speak of their incarcerated loved one due to assumed guilt and shame. They are sometimes among the victims of the incarcerated loved one, but unconditional love compels them to support them through accepting phone calls, providing commissary, and through visitations. Andrew Sung Park purports that “the philosophy of restorative justice embraces apology, healing, compassion, mercy, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Victims can take advantage of meeting their offenders and receiving support from other victims.”<sup>37</sup> The criminal justice system focuses on the punishment and incarceration of the offender instead of the resolution of the *han* of the victim and the oppressed. Minjung theology addresses the *han* of the family and loved

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<sup>37</sup> Andrew Sung Park, *From Hurt to Healing: A Theology of the Wounded* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2004), 115.

ones of the incarcerated, the invisible victims, as well as all victims of injustice. The concept and focus of Minjung theology in the doctoral project do not seek to absolve the offender's sin so much as they seek to uplift, inform, and affirm the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.

### **Black Theology of Liberation**

This section will examine Black liberation theology with a focus on theological anthropology. Theological anthropology is the study of humankind as it relates to God. Theological anthropology, particularly *Imago Dei*, ministers to the African American church and community of oppressed and marginalized people. African slaves, as well as African Americans today, identify with the suffering and redemption of Jesus Christ.

. . . images of Jesus in particular were meant by African Americans as a positive and creative effort to craft themselves in light of their understanding of Christian faith. Early discussions and depictions of Jesus Christ within the African American imagination did not necessarily fix on the physical presentation of Christ as similar to that of enslaved Africans. Instead, much more emphasis was given to a shared image based on ethics and epistemology, meant to short-circuit white supremacy and advance African American self-understanding.<sup>38</sup>

Jesus' life and ministry did not promote a theological, ethical, or social gospel that favored the upper class, the rich, or the privileged as did the Pharisees and Sadducees. Instead, Jesus' ministry was geared toward the poor, the downcast, the women, the marginalized, and the captives: those who were overlooked and underserved.

Black theology presents a message of liberation for African American people living in a society that has persecuted them with racism and attempts to continually push

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<sup>38</sup> Anthony B. Pinn, "Looking Like Me? Jesus Image, Christology, and the Limitations of Theological Blackness," in *Christology and Whiteness: What Would Jesus Do?*, ed. George Yancy (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 170.

them to live in the shame and contempt of racism while denying racism exists in America.

In the context of the African American church, black theology considers the following question: What does it mean to be black and Christian for a people situated in the midst of American racism and called by God to be full human beings? Black theology believes that the God of freedom has created African Americans to be free — to reach their full humanity without obstacles blocking the goal of becoming human beings who can freely do God's will. And through Jesus Christ's liberation message and presence, God has provided a way for the church to move toward that freedom. Similarly, God today continues to offer a divine Spirit to enable and sustain black folk on their journey toward a liberated humanity.<sup>39</sup>

Black theology is supported by Isaiah 61:1, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and freedom to the prisoners."<sup>40</sup> This scripture passage adequately describes the plight of the African American community in the United States of America which includes poverty, oppression, and mass incarceration:

Blacks as a group are the most economically, educationally, and physically deprived people in America, with the possible exception of Native Americans. Moreover, the legacy of slavery and the effects of legalized disenfranchisement cannot be overcome by the illusive nature of equal opportunity. Blacks have been subjected to the most dehumanizing experience of any American inhabitants — legal, educational, and moral debasement documented by over two hundred years of slavery.<sup>41</sup>

The African Americans community can trace poverty, oppression, and mass incarceration back to the institution of slavery. The African American people were taken

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<sup>39</sup> Dwight N. Hopkins, *Introducing Black Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 4.

<sup>40</sup> Isaiah 61:1, CSB.

<sup>41</sup> James Harris, *Pastoral Theology: A Black Church Perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 48.

from their homeland, Africa, chained to one another in a slave ship and transported to America to live a life of servitude. Their identity, culture, language, and family were taken from them, and they were forced to live in a strange land. A parallel for descendants of African people in America is found in scripture.

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willow in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?<sup>42</sup>

This was the beginning of the oppression of an entire race of people: African Americans. They provided slave labor; it was free labor. They worked without pay for generations unable to save anything. They did not own anything. They did not even own themselves. They were chattel, the property of the slaveowners. Yet they sang hymns and had hope in God for deliverance. Converting the slaves to Christianity was a prime objective of slaveowners and missionaries.

Certainly, whites intended the gospel as presented to slaves to serve partly as an instrument of social control – that is, they expected devout slaves to be more obedient – but they also expected religion to serve the same purpose for the white population. Many whites believed they had a religious duty to bring the Christian message to slaves as a way of furthering God's kingdom. One justification for slavery was that it was a providentially designed institution for Christianizing and civilizing the 'heathen' of Africa. Although slaves certainly understood the one purpose of the white-dominated churches and their ministers was to enjoin the slaves' obedience to their earthly masters as well as their heavenly masters, bondspeople also clearly experienced a sense of joy, a purpose for living, and a sense of spiritual liberation in the biracial churches. The precise mixture of social control and spiritual freedom that slaves perceived in such worship experiences is a subject of much interest among present-day scholars.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Psalm 137: 1-4, KJV.

<sup>43</sup> Larry M. James, *Biracial Fellowship in Antebellum Baptist Churches, Masters and Slaves in the House of the Lord: Race and Religion in the American South, 1740-1870*, ed. John B. Boles (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2015), 37.



Slave traders and slaveowners used biblical scriptures to justify slavery in the United States. They identified Noah's son, Ham, as a Black man and used Genesis 9:25 to justify this belief. "Canaan is cursed. He will be the lowest of slaves to his brother."<sup>44</sup>

They also used the following verse, Ephesians 6: 5-8.

Slaves, obey your human masters with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as you would Christ. Don't work only while being watched, as people-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, do God's will from your heart. Serve with a good attitude, as to the Lord and not to people, knowing that whatever good each one does, slave or free he will receive this back from the Lord.<sup>45</sup>

Christianity played a major part in the life of a slave. Christ came to set the captives free; however, it is said that the slaveowners used Christianity to try to control the slaves. Slavery was further justified by converting the captive slaves to Christianity because they were thought of as heathens and brute beasts in need of transformation, rather than man created in the image of God:

From the very beginning of the Atlantic slave trade, conversion of the slaves to Christianity was viewed by the emerging nations of Western Christendom as a justification for enslavement of Africans. When Portuguese caravels returned from the coast of West Africa with human booty in the fifteenth century, Gomes Eannes De Azurara, a chronicler of their achievements, observed that 'the greater benefit' belonged not to the Portuguese adventurers but to the captive Africans, 'for though their bodies were now brought into some subjection, that was a small matter in comparison of their souls, which would now possess true freedom for evermore.'<sup>46</sup>

The irony of the slave religion situation is that the masters used the Bible and Christianity to control the African American slaves; however, the African American

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<sup>44</sup> Genesis 9:25, CSB.

<sup>45</sup> Ephesians 6: 5-8, CSB.

<sup>46</sup> Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The Invisible Institution in the Antebellum South* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2004), 96.

slaves used the Bible to memorize scripture, to learn how to read, and to pray with a deep hope in the Lord for liberation from slavery.

When Emancipation came and the slaves were set free, they still owned nothing. Poverty was rampant because even though they were set free after emancipation, they faced poverty, famine, and re-enslavement. Most of the re-enslavement occurred through the United States prison system. There were laws put in place to incarcerate African Americans after slavery that continue to influence the criminal justice system today. The Thirteenth Amendment is one example:

The 13th Amendment was passed by the Senate on April 8, 1864, and the House on January 31, 1865, both prior to the end of the Civil War. It became a condition for rejoining the Union after all the seceding states had to vote to accept the terms of the Amendment. The required two-thirds of the states ratified the Amendment on December 6, 1865. With the exception of Texas (which had about 250,000 slaves at the time) and areas in the West not yet part of the United States. Slaves could no longer be held by individuals, just the government which included those jails which the 13th Amendment left open as a place where slavery was still allowed.<sup>47</sup>

The reason for an ongoing discussion on slavery in 2023 is that slavery still exists in America. America's original sin of slavery still remains; it just goes by another name: mass incarceration and convict leasing. Florida is one of the few states that allows convict leasing. And in light of the recent mid-term elections, Florida has found a way to subvert voting rights:

In Florida, voters passed an Amendment to restore the voting rights of felons. Republicans who control the state passed a bill requiring released prisoners to pay any restitution and fines before being allowed to vote. The slaves toiling for the state receive no credit for their labor to go toward their debts. One inmate said, 'We used to get \$100 and a bus ticket, now we just get a bus ticket.' For all our

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<sup>47</sup> William Spivey, "The Loophole in the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment: Why Slavery Still Exists Today," *Democracy Guardian*, January 25, 2020.

alleged enlightenment as a nation. We still haven't seen fit to rid ourselves of the original sin, slavery.<sup>48</sup>

James H. Cone, in his book *Black Theology of Liberation*, attempts to answer the question, "what has the gospel of Jesus Christ to do with the black struggle for justice in the United States?"

This book cannot be understood without a keen knowledge of the civil rights and black power movements of the 1960s and a general comprehension of nearly four hundred years of slavery and segregation in North America, both of which were enacted into law by government and openly defended as ordained of God by most white churches and their theologians.<sup>49</sup>

In the Charles Booth Conference presented by United Theological Seminary on October 26, 2022, Bishop Darin Moore stated, "We do not live in a prophetic culture. The preacher in the Black Church is popular because the preacher cultivates relationships. But the prophet is not so popular because the prophet calls for repentance and realignment."<sup>50</sup>

The prophet represents the Black theologian. The Black theologian is in tension with the Black church when addressing the issues of racism, economics, and social justice. The Black and White churches are generally conservative toward sociopolitical liberation and economic empowerment in the African American community.

The contemporary Black Church's distant and uneasy relationship with black theology is a direct outgrowth of its relatively conservative approach in dealing with matters of race. This approach reflects internal 'dialectical tensions' that have characterized the Black Church ever since its inception. One of these tensions is the dialectic between the priestly and the prophetic. If we can envision the two components of this tension occupying opposite ends of an imaginary scale, then the dynamic between them represents the friction between

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<sup>48</sup> Spivey, "The Loophole in the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment."

<sup>49</sup> Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, xix.

<sup>50</sup> Darin Moore, "Charles E. Booth Lecture Series Conference," United Theological Seminary, October 24-26, 2022.

conservatism and radicalism. The potential power of the Black Church resides in its creative ability to hold these opposites together. Unfortunately, however, the Black Church, which occupies the conservative end, and black theology, which clings to the radical end, have usually chosen to pull these opposites apart.<sup>51</sup>

The White evangelical and conservative churches mostly refuse to acknowledge and address racism and social justice. Most remain unwilling to have a productive conversation on these subjects.

Work must be done to further implement Black theology in the Black church and the African American community. Dennis Wiley and Christine Wiley note in *A Radically Inclusive View for the Fellowship of the Black Church*, that one of the best models of the implementation of black theology at a local congregational level is the Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago where Reverend Dr. Jeremiah A. Wright, Jr. was the pastor for thirty-six years and Reverend Dr. Otis Moss, III is the current pastor.

As soon as one enters the church . . . one can sense the presence of black theology; it is evident in the décor, the art, the attire, the music, the dance, the liturgy, the preaching, the teaching, the educational literature, the bookstore, the names of the ministries, the outreach programs, the mission, the motto ('unashamedly Black and unapologetically Christian'), and in just about every other facet of the overall church culture. Black theology – and especially the issue of race/racism – is not an afterthought, an addendum, or a 'side show' but . . . at the very heart of the church's identity.<sup>52</sup>

Jurgen Moltmann is a contemporary theologian whose influence is seen in Black liberation theology. In his book, *The Crucified God*, he states,

God cannot suffer unwillingly or helplessly. Neither can he suffer because of any deficiency in his being. Nor, again, can he ever be a mere victim, helplessly assailed. But he can suffer actively. He can go towards suffering and accept it. He can suffer in love. This does not bespeak any deficiency in his being. On the contrary, it is possible only because of 'the fulness of his being, i.e., his love.' He

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<sup>51</sup> Dennis W. Wiley and Christine Y. Wiley, "A Radically Inclusive Vision for the Fellowship of the Black Church," in *Black Practical Theology*, eds. Dale P. Andrews and Robert London Smith, Jr. (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2015), 133.

<sup>52</sup> Wiley and Wiley, *A Radically Inclusive Vision for the Fellowship of the Black Church*, 136.

is affected by human actions and sufferings not because he is afflicted by some neurosis but because 'he is interested in his creation, his people and his right.'<sup>53</sup>

Black liberation theology is essential to uplift the African American church and the African American community, to relate the gospel to the struggle for freedom, and to overcome the effects of mass incarceration on African American loved ones.

### **Womanist Theology**

Womanist theology, through the lens of theological anthropology, informs the doctoral project. The prophets and pioneers that ushered in Black theology to address the issues of racism and white supremacy in Eurocentric American theology did not regard the voiceless and powerless estate of African American women. Black women have long been very active and instrumental in the Black church and in the civil rights movement. Black women have suffered the atrocities of slavery, reconstruction, and Jim Crow, and have borne the brunt of racism in America. Black women have also been active and instrumental in the feminist and women's suffrage movements. Jesus, in His earthly ministry, often gave voice to the marginalized which included the women who had no voice or presence. Womanist theology was developed for Black women who had not been given recognition or representation in the feminist or Black church movements.

Roberts and Cone, as with many of their generation, touted the black struggle against systemic racism and white supremacy in America while failing to see the particular struggle of black women as they resisted both white supremacy and gender inequalities. Drawing on the work of James Cone, Jacquelyn Grant and Delores Williams were pioneers in casting a prophetic theological vision of doing theology and ethics. Stephanie Mitchem describes womanist theology as 'the systematic, faith-based exploration of the many facets of African American women's religiosity.' Womanist theology, she says, is 'based on the complex realities of black women's lives. Womanist scholars recognize and name the

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<sup>53</sup> Donald Macleod, "The Christology of Jurgen Moltmann," *Themelios* 24, no. 2 (n.d.).

imagination and initiative that African American women have utilized in developing sophisticated religious responses to their lives.<sup>54</sup>

Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, and Fannie Lou Hamer are a few of the African American women who have been leaders, activists, and staunch advocates for the African Americans in slavery, the Black church, and the African American community. From slavery to the present, African American women have lived in the chaos of emotional and physical violence, racial hatred, domestic abuse, and poverty and lack. In her book, *Hope in the Holler*, A. Elaine Brown Crawford suggests hope is the remedy for African American women suffering victimization from oppressive circumstances.

African American women have lived in the echoes of their own Holler. The Holler is the primal cry of pain, abuse, violence, separation. It is a soul-piercing shrill of the African ancestors that demands the recognition and appreciation of their humanity. The Holler is the refusal to be silenced in a world that denied their very existence as women. The Holler is the renunciation of racialized and genderized violence perpetrated against them generation after generation. The Holler is a cry to God to 'come see about me,' one of your children.<sup>55</sup>

This book gives one of the most comprehensive definitions of Womanist theology.

This revitalized attention to the theme of hope is pertinent for the emerging womanist<sup>56</sup> theology, because hope has played a pivotal role in enabling African American women to overcome a legacy of abuse in the church and in society. African American women have been the 'permissible victims'<sup>57</sup> of American

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<sup>54</sup> Johnny Bernard Hill, *Prophetic Rage: A Postcolonial Theology of Liberation* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 31.

<sup>55</sup> A. Elaine Brown Crawford, *Hope in the Holler* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), xii.

<sup>56</sup> The term womanist was coined by Alice Walker in her work *In Search of Our Mothers' Garden: Womanist Prose* (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), xi-xii. The term is derived from the word womanish and refers to African American women as "courageous, audacious, concerned about family, community and relationship with God." Walker calls the womanist "a black feminist, a feminist of color." Womanists are concerned about the multidimensional oppression (minimally race, class, and gender) of African American women and women of color in general.

<sup>57</sup> Frances Woods uses this term to designate groups or individuals that can be oppressed without consequences. The least permissible victim is the heterosexual, white, wealthy male. Woods, "Take my Yoke Upon You," in *A Troubling in My Soul: Womanist Perspective on Evil and Suffering*, ed. Emilie M. Townes (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1993), 39-41, 46.

society. They were the persons who could be victimized with little or no repercussions. African American women's bodies have been abused physically and sexually. Their existence has been scarred by the brutality and sexual exploitation of the middle passage and chattel slavery, as well as by the pervasive institutional and social forms of race, class, and gender oppression that persist to this day.<sup>58</sup>

Womanist theology was born in the academy and is focused on the ordinary Black women who have been marginalized and silenced in the Black church and in society at large. Womanist theology is active in securing rights for the underserved in the African American community. In addition to womanist theology advocating for women, they advocate for their men and children, the incarcerated, the homeless, and all the oppressed.

This doctoral project focuses on the portion of the African American church and community with incarcerated loved ones. Gina Clayton-Johnson, of The Essie Justice Group, advocates for women with incarcerated loved ones. In an interview with the Women's Leadership Online Summit, she addressed the many issues of mass incarceration in the African American community. She notes that there are 2.3 million people incarcerated in the United States of America, with 2.7 million children having incarcerated parents. These numbers represent a 500% increase in incarceration in the United States over the last forty years. From these statistics, she states the vast increase in mass incarceration in the African American and Hispanic communities is an attempt to control Black and Brown people.<sup>59</sup> She highlights the issues that are facing African American women with incarcerated loved ones and how the criminal justice system

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<sup>58</sup> Crawford, *Hope in the Holler*, xi.

<sup>59</sup> Gina Clayton-Johnson, "Because She's Powerful," Interview by Rinku Sen (Host), Women's Leadership Online Summit: The Political Isolation and Resistance of Women with Incarcerated Loved Ones. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Video, 1 hour, 2019, <https://video-alexanderstreet-com.dtl.idm.oclc.org/watch/because-she-s-powerful-the-political-isolation-and-resistance-of-women-with-incarcerated-loved-ones>.

harms African American families and communities. The harm that impacts African American women is emotional, mental, and physical health issues, including severe depression, suicidal tendencies, heart disease, and high blood pressure, which are stress related. They are also impacted economically through financial destabilization. And they are impacted by extreme political isolation.

Political isolation occurs when a system of control socially isolates a significant number of historically and currently oppressed people and their social isolation reinforces a hierarchy that is based on race, gender, or class.<sup>60</sup>

Womanist theology seeks liberation for women of color from racism, sexism, oppression of class and caste, and political isolation. Mass incarceration affects African American families and the entire community, especially African American women, who are the caretakers, supporters, and the ones who clean up after devastating crises in the African American community. They are the ones who handle the family business. They do this without assistance due to shame and humiliation, and they do it without compensation and acknowledgment.

In our cities, out-of-control incarceration has infected poorer neighborhoods like a plague. There are more than 1.7 million children in the United States with one parent – usually their father – locked up.<sup>61</sup> Single-parent households put a severe economic strain on the remaining parent, who must support her children financially and be their homemakers at the same time. They also make it more likely that children will drift into defiant, disobedient frames of mind. Many know that, statistically, they as well are slated for incarceration.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Clayton-Johnson, Video, 2019.

<sup>61</sup> Sara Schirmer, Ashley Nellis, and Marc Mauer, “Incarcerated Parents and Their Children,” *The Sentencing Project*, February 2009, [http://www.sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/publications/inc\\_incarceratedparents.pdf](http://www.sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/publications/inc_incarceratedparents.pdf).

<sup>62</sup> Hill Harper, *Letters to an Incarcerated Brother: Encouragement, Hope, and Healing for Inmates and Their Loved Ones* (New York, NY: Penguin Random House, 2014), 4.



Womanist theology addresses a void in the African American church and community. African American women are the majority of the members of the African American church, and they are active in the church in service and administration. They pray for the African American church, the community, African American men, their children, their natural family, and their church family. They pray for the government and the president; they pray for incarcerated loved ones. They pray to God to set the captives free, for the criminal justice system, and for prison reform. Womanist theology is not only concerned with the church, but it also stands in the gap for the wholeness of the community. Womanist theology addresses the burden of being labeled “Strong Black Women.” They bear the weight of the Black family and community in their heart, knowing they can take their burden to the Lord in prayer.

Historically, African American women have used humor to vent their feelings,<sup>63</sup> since other means of acknowledging painful emotions are difficult and are often unacceptable for Strong Black Women. ‘Crying is a secret act not to be shared in public but when shared, done only with the closest few.’<sup>64</sup> Therefore, the Strong Black Woman’s emotions and actions are controlled. She functions as if she is fine, but in actuality, she is numb. Becoming numb is the typical way many African American women survive painful and psychological insults that would normally be responded to more assertively. She isolates herself when she is feeling vulnerable, thus, she is self-contained.<sup>65</sup> Others do not know how to respond to her whenever she finally does reach out and ask for help. Defined by Patricia Collins and later described by bell hooks, the sociopolitical status

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<sup>63</sup> D. C. Dance, *Honey, Hush! An Anthology of African American Women’s Humor* (New York, NY: Norton, 1988), np, in *Women Out of Order: Risking Change and Creating Care in a Multicultural World*, eds. Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner and Teresa Snorton (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2020), 48.

<sup>64</sup> Regina E. Romero, “The Icon of the Strong Black Women: The Paradox of Strength,” in *Psychotherapy with African American Women: Innovations in Psychodynamic Perspective and Practice*, ed. L. C. Jackson and B. Greene (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 2000), 227, in *Women Out of Order: Risking Change and Creating Care in a Multicultural World*, eds. Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner and Teresa Snorton (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2020), 48.

<sup>65</sup> Romero, “The Icon of the Strong Black Women,” 228.

imposed on African American women leads to their addiction to being tough.<sup>66</sup> Dr. Jacqueline Grant's womanist theology<sup>67</sup> helps to frame an understanding of how racism, classism, and sexism all contribute to the enduring idea that African American women are to be strong.<sup>68</sup>

Womanist theology is intricately woven into the Doctor of Ministry project, being that the majority of family and loved ones in the African American community supporting those who are incarcerated are women. A great deal is owed to womanist theology in that it speaks to and ministers to the African American women in the Black church and the community, especially to those with incarcerated loved ones.

### Conclusion

The scripture focus is Luke 4:18-19. The place is Galilee and marks the beginning of Jesus' Galilean ministry. The pericope invites those involved in ministry to seek the Spirit of the Lord God for guidance and direction. This biblical passage relates to the doctoral project as it compels those ministering to the loved ones of those who have been incarcerated to rely on the anointing of the Lord to strengthen and provide for them as they support their loved ones. The pericope speaks to Black theology inasmuch that in

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<sup>66</sup> Patricia H. Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (London, UK: Harper Collins Academic, 1990), np; bell hooks, *Sisters of the Yam: Black Women and Self-Recovery* (Boston, MA: South End, 1993), np, in *Women Out of Order: Risking Change and Creating Care in a Multicultural World*, eds. Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner and Teresa Snorton (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2020), 48.

<sup>67</sup> Jacquelyn Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989), np, in *Women Out of Order: Risking Change and Creating Care in a Multicultural World*, eds. Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner and Teresa Snorton (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2020), 48.

<sup>68</sup> Beverly R. Wallace, "A Womanist Legacy of Trauma, Grief, and Loss: Reframing the Notion of the Strong Black Woman Icon," in *Women Out of Order: Risking Change and Creating Care in a Multicultural World*, eds. Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner and Teresa Snorton (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2020), 48.

this passage, Jesus proclaims He has come to set the captives free and release the prisoners. This entails more than physically opening the prison doors. The pericope proclaims, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.”<sup>69</sup>

To be free from sin is to be truly free, and only the Lord has the power to deliver this freedom. The theme of Black theology speaks to the family and loved ones of those who are incarcerated. Those who do not know the journey of supporting an incarcerated loved one, particularly those who do not live in the African American community, will never know the spiritual, psychological, and economic impact that mass incarceration has on the family and loved ones of the incarcerated and the African American community at large. The family and loved ones of the incarcerated are the broken-hearted, and only the Lord can put the shattered pieces back together. The work of pastoral and Black theology informs this doctoral project as it aims to provide a support group forum and collaborative resources used to repair the breach in the African American community. Womanist theology informs the doctoral project as it encourages the Black church to reach out to help the women and families who have incarcerated loved ones; it provides support and hope to the families, loved ones, and the African American community. The Theological Foundations provides a basis on which to build the Interdisciplinary Foundations chapter.

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<sup>69</sup> Luke 4:18-19, NRSV.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS**

#### **Introduction**

This doctoral project is formulated to provide a forum for the family members of the incarcerated. This project intends to support the families and loved ones of those who are incarcerated by providing a forum of support, resources, and advocacy for the families of incarcerated persons during their incarceration and upon re-entry. The support provided will provide a safe space for the family and loved ones to express their assessment of their personal situation in relation to their incarcerated loved one and a forum to share their stories with one another and provide informative presentations and solutions to their own situation. The resources will be garnered from the community agencies and organizations already set up to provide information and resources for family and inmate support regarding re-entry programs. The advocacy for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated will be in the form of cognitive behavior and self-care; the advocacy for the inmate will be in the form of communication and self-care. 2.3 million men and women are enmeshed in the American criminal justice system. It is projected that one out of every three African American children will spend time behind bars.<sup>1</sup> Mass incarceration in the African America community has a negative impact on the African

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<sup>1</sup> Laurne Kessler, *Free: two years, six lives, and the long journey home* (Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, 2022), 15.

American family as it impedes family relationships, especially parent-child relationships, family stability, and economic stability. If the loved ones of those incarcerated in the African American community are provided the knowledge, resources, and opportunity via a community forum that provides spiritual and emotional resources and support, then the families can support their incarcerated loved ones during their incarceration and upon their re-entry. With this support, their imprisoned loved ones can fulfill their sentence with humanity and dignity. The newly released inmates can come out of prison with the hope of reuniting with family and community. The intended outcome of the doctoral project is to provide a forum for the families and loved ones of the incarcerated with the intended purpose of providing a safe space to share and gather information. The symposium will be conducted in partnership with community agencies and organizations that have the ability to provide resources for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated and to the released inmate upon re-entry. The forum established will provide knowledge and opportunity for advocacy for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. Against this backdrop, the chosen fields for the interdisciplinary explorations will be social psychology, cultural trauma, and cognitive behavior. The designated interdisciplinary theme is psychology. Psychology is the scientific study of the mind and behavior.

This paper will concentrate on the division of social psychology. A general definition of social psychology is the study of human behavior and how individuals or groups interact with and relate to one another, and the relationship between individuals

and groups with respect to prejudice, human affection and attraction, emotion, and thoughts or cognition.<sup>2</sup>

Social psychologists investigate human behavior, of course, but their primary concern is human behavior in a social context.<sup>3</sup> Social psychology bears a close relationship to several other fields, especially sociology and psychology. Sociology is the scientific study of human society. It examines social institutions (family, religion, politics), stratification within society (class structure, race and ethnicity, gender roles), basic social processes (socialization, deviance, social control), and the structure of social units (groups, networks, formal organizations, bureaucracies). In contrast, psychology is the scientific study of the individual and of individual behavior. Although this behavior may be social in character, it need not be. Psychology addresses such topics as human learning, perception, memory, intelligence, emotion, motivation, and personality . . . Social psychology bridges sociology and psychology.<sup>4</sup> Social psychology concerns itself with our interactions and relationships with other people. Some social psychological research examines how we as individuals feel and think about, and act towards, others that we encounter in the world.<sup>5</sup>

This interdisciplinary foundations paper will examine social psychology as it relates to criminal justice, cultural trauma in the African American community, and social cognitive behavior. It will examine the social psychology prevalent in the criminal justice system that affects the lives of many African American males and the African American community proper. This involvement can be brought about as a result of broken laws or the criminal justice system's involvement in the African American community as a result of over-policing in the African American community. Either way, the result is mass incarceration. Mass incarceration in the African American community directly results in

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<sup>2</sup> Lumen, "Social Psychology and Influences on Behavior," <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/waymaker-psychology/chapter/what-is-social-psychology/>.

<sup>3</sup> John D. DeLamater, Daniel J. Myers, and Jessica L. Collett, *Social Psychology* (Boulder, CO: Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), 3.

<sup>4</sup> DeLamater, Myers, and Collett, *Social Psychology*, 6-7.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Wright and Hamish Macleod, "Social Psychology," in *Get Set for Psychology* (Edinburgh, UK: University Press, 2006), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1g0b0ht.10>.

cultural trauma in the African American community. This paper will examine the cause and effect of cultural trauma in the African American community and suggest possible relief and deterrence. And finally, this paper will examine social cognitive behavior and cognitive behavior theory as it relates to the plight of the family and loved ones of those who are incarcerated in the United States prison system.

## **Overview**

### *Biblical Overview*

The Bible passage, Luke 4:14-21, focuses on the marginalized and disenfranchised community. This verse directly relates to the doctoral project's focus on the marginalized and disenfranchised community. The family and loved ones of the incarcerated suffer stigma from being related to inmates, especially if highly publicized cases are played out in the media. This doctoral project depends on the Lord, His Spirit, and the gospel's proclamation in collaboration with and informed by the interdisciplinary fields of study.

The passage of scripture in Luke 4:18-19 differs slightly from the scripture passage in Isaiah 61:1-2a. A journal article entitled "Jesus and Isaiah" suggests the following:

. . . The purported reading (Isa 61:1-2) omits a phrase from Isa 61:1 ('to bind up the brokenhearted'), includes a phrase from Isa 58:6 ("to let the oppressed go free') and agrees with the LXX on reading 'recovery of sight to the blind' rather than 'release to the prisoners.'<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Steve Moyise, "Jesus and Isaiah," *Neotestamentica* 43, no. 2 (2009): 263.

What is consistent in these two parallel verses is Jesus' declaration that the Spirit of the Lord God is upon Him, and He has been anointed, consecrated, and sent for the purpose of proclaiming the Gospel, the good news. Since Jesus Christ has the Spirit of the Lord God upon Him and is anointed and consecrated to teach and preach the gospel, all involved in ministry and the work of the Lord should seek the Lord's guidance and direction in fulfilling their kingdom purpose in conjunction with the interdisciplinary studies. Those called and chosen for ministry and community support must operate according to God's purpose and plan, having been called and chosen to set the captives free, open the prison doors to those who are bound, and minister to the loved ones of those who are bound; hence, they must do it in the power of the Spirit. This doctoral project seeks the Spirit of the Lord God for empowerment and fulfillment. Jesus set the precedence for ministry, and His example embodies the preeminent criteria for success.

### *Historical Overview*

The historical movement chosen for the Historical Foundation Precis was "The Post Civil War prison system in the United States and the effect on the African American family and community." The post-Civil War prison system has a foundation built on an unenforced Emancipation, a botched Reconstruction, Black Codes, Jim Crow laws, and unbridled and illegal Klan activity. These activities associated with the post-Civil War prison system birthed a system of cultural trauma within the African American community that persists today. The increasing demand for and the scarcity of labor in the early 1800s indicates the U.S. penal system was shaped by the rising and waning tide of labor demand and supply. This was especially apparent in Southern states that thrived on



the plantation economy of enslaved African American labor. In the Southern states, post Emancipation, the enforced labor requirements of African Americans as inmates were more severe and very harsh. The same ideology and justification that persisted in slavery was carried over after the Emancipation Proclamation and persists in the U. S. prison system today and has played a significant role in the history of the U.S. prison system and policing.<sup>7</sup>

The Historical Foundations provides a historical basis for cultural trauma inherent in the African American community that informs and undergirds the doctoral project.

### *Theological Overview*

A person's individual theology is often based on the structure of the church or the church organization. The theology of the Christian church can be traced back to thirteen historic creeds and confessions developed centuries ago by councils of bishops, including the foundational documents of the Nicene Creed, the Apostles' Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and the Articles of Religion. In many local churches, an affirmation of faith is recited every Sunday before the morning worship service begins. It is an affirmation of the church body's theological foundation. Key Bible teaching and key scriptural truths contained in the creeds, and affirmations, along with pastoral guidance, attending church service, Bible Study, and fellowship develop individual theology and build individual faith. Theology helps believers exercise their gifts and provides the foundation for the

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<sup>7</sup> Gertrudis Mercadal, "Prison Privatization in the United States: A New Strategy for Racial Control," Dissertation, Boca Raton, FL: Florida Atlantic University, 2014.

church body. The theological themes explored in this doctoral thesis are pastoral theology, Black liberation theology, womanist theology, and soteriology.

The first theological theme chosen for review is pastoral theology which is associated with practical theology by many, but not all, theologians. Where most theological themes are steeped in theological theories and discussions, pastoral theology is concerned with the practical application of theology through preaching, teaching, and reaching the people with the word and message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is a theologically driven approach to ministry. In *Pastoral Theology: Theological Foundation for Who a Pastor is and What a Pastor does*, the author defines pastoral theology as follows:

Pastoral Theology establishes a theological framework for ministry that is biblically derived, *historically* informed, doctrinally sound, missionally engaged, philosophically deliberate, and contextually relevant.<sup>8</sup>

The second theological theme introduced is Black theology of liberation. In the African American church and community, pastoral theology entails ministering to oppressed and marginalized people; therefore, pastoral theology in the African American church and community *is* Black Liberation Theology. In his book, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, James H. Cone states the following:

In view of the biblical emphasis on liberation, it seems not only appropriate but necessary to define the Christian community as the community of the oppressed which joins Jesus Christ in his fight for the liberation of humankind. The task of theology, then, is to explicate the meaning of God's liberating activity so that those who labor under enslaving powers will see the forces of liberation are the very activity of God . . . God's activity on behalf of the oppressed.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Daniel L. Akin and R. Scott Pace, *Pastoral Theology: Theological Foundations for Who a Pastor Is and What He Does* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2017), 20.

<sup>9</sup> James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, Fiftieth Anniversary Edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2020), 3.

The third theological theme is Womanist theology. The plight of the African American woman in the United States of America has been to live a life of double jeopardy. The African American woman is jeopardized for being of African American descent. She has a legacy of slavery, hardship, and trauma. The African American woman is also jeopardized for being a woman. She is subject to double discrimination, disenfranchisement, and marginalization. She is an African American woman in a society that created a constitution that was designed for White male supremacy. Womanist theology examines the plight of African American women and searches the scriptures to address the cause and effect while seeking a solution. Womanist theology informs the doctoral project by identifying with and speaking to the strengths and weaknesses of the women who represent the majority of family support for their incarcerated loved ones.

The fourth theological theme of soteriology speaks to the spiritual condition of man. Those women and family members who care for their incarcerated loved ones need to be uplifted and strengthened through prayer and support. True rehabilitation for their loved ones can be found in the gospel of Jesus Christ as stated in 2 Corinthians 5:17: What this means is that those who become Christians become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun! (NLT). The gospel of Jesus Christ can also strengthen and build up the family and loved ones as they support their incarcerated loved ones. Whenever the opportunity is presented to share Christ, this doctoral project is prepared to present the gospel.

These four theological themes inform the doctoral project. Pastoral theology lends itself to the family's need for someone to walk along with them through the process of having a family member incarcerated. It speaks to the family's need for a spiritual leader

to process their grief and encourage them throughout the incarceration process and duration. Black liberation theology is the means for the family of the incarcerated to address the effect of incarceration on the African American community. Soteriology is the answer for the brokenness incarceration inflicts on the family and loved ones of those who are incarcerated, as well as the answer for the incarcerated individual to find true freedom in salvation through confession of sin, reconciliation, and acceptance of Jesus Christ. And womanist theology gives voice to the mothers, wives, fiancés, aunts, sisters, daughters, lovers, and all females who are the main supporters of incarcerated males, and also to give voice to the incarcerated female population.

### **Interdisciplinary Theme: Social Psychology**

In the *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology*, it is noted that one of the most enduring challenges for social psychologists has been to understand the nature of intergroup prejudice. It notes that social psychologists' perception of prejudice has evolved over time. This prejudice that is under analysis is specifically Whites' prejudice toward Blacks.<sup>10</sup> The book quickly acknowledges racial prejudice as an important problem that needs attention and resolution. The historical foundation of the carceral system in the United States, from Emancipation to the present mass incarceration dilemma, indicates that racial prejudice is a primary factor. Racial prejudice in the criminal justice system directly affects the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. It affects them as it relates to longer sentences and harsher penalties for minorities.

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<sup>10</sup> Rupert Brown and Sam Gaertner, eds., *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Intergroup Processes* (Oxford, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2001), 198.

The relationship between psychology and criminal justice can be explored by examining how criminal law and psychological science interact while exploring and understanding relevant findings. Criminal justice processes and principles raise numerous psychological issues.

It is not that psychology provides easy answers to dealing with most legal issues. Rather, psychological sciences help raise concerns and point to possible remedies . . . We have identified the enormous discretionary power given to police, attorneys, judges, juries, correctional officers, and virtually anyone involved in criminal justice processes. Psychological sciences can help us determine whether and how to allow, limit, or even foster that discretion. We know, for example, that people are inherently biased and that bias manifests itself differently in different contexts. The central concern arising from that reality involves how we are to control such bias.<sup>11</sup>

It is a daunting task for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated to understand the criminal justice system that has taken control of their son or daughter. It is further exacerbated by the underlying and inherent biases in the criminal justice system that discriminated against the African American community. These biases are manifested in degrees of a felony, length of sentencing, and term of probation and parole.

In large measure, whatever the theoretical analysis preferred during the early years of study, prejudice was thought to involve negative attitudes, which led to rather overt patterns of discrimination. Indeed, prior to the legislative changes making overt discrimination illegal and admitting to prejudice socially taboo, prejudice was not only normatively (and legally) acceptable but encouraged. The legislative changes fundamentally altered the social and political landscape in significant ways. Consider that, prior to such changes, one could more readily expect disapproval from others for responding in positive ways toward Black people (e.g., having a Black as a roommate, friend, etc.) than for responding in negative ways (e.g., excluding Blacks from employment opportunities or as friends). This pattern of responding to Blacks in the United States was due, at least in part, to the historical legacy of slavery and the development of Jim Crow laws which legally sanctioned the 'separate but equal' concept. In a nation founded on the fundamental principle of equality, such discriminatory patterns

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<sup>11</sup> Roger J. R. Levesque, *Psychology and Law of Criminal Justice Processes: Cases and Material* (New York, NY: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2005), 18.

ultimately set the stage for a kind of collective moral uneasiness associated with these discriminatory patterns.<sup>12</sup>

Television broadcasting was a catalyst for the coverage and awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was the evangelist who influenced nationwide coverage of the Civil Rights movement in the United States and worldwide coverage abroad. The Civil Rights movement made lynchings, racial hatred, and Klan activity against African Americans in the United States of America visible to the world.

In contrast to classic theories exploring the origins of prejudice, many of the contemporary conceptions of prejudice have tried to understand the implications of the legal and normative changes on the modern face of prejudice. At the societal level, the changes have been dramatic. In many ways, overt discriminatory treatment of others based on race has been successfully eliminated (i.e., no longer are there separate water fountains, lunch counters, etc.). Changes at the individual level also appear to have occurred. Survey studies of racial and ethnic attitudes and beliefs suggest that racial prejudice is declining in the United States (e.g., Taylor, Sheatsley, & Greeley, 1978; Schuman, Steeh, & Bobo, 1985).<sup>13</sup>

The authors of the above quote are sorely mistaken to report that discrimination based on race has been successfully eliminated. Whereas there are no Black and White-water fountains and everyone can sit at the lunch counter, the popular Amazon Artificial Intelligence (AI) product used for facial recognition as pitched to police departments and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), was proven to be over thirty percent less effective on darker female faces, than lighter male faces. This information was published in a peer-reviewed audit study by Deborah Raji and Joy Buolamwini, two Black female technologists involved in the development of facial recognition algorithms.

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<sup>12</sup> Patricia G. Devine, E. Ashby Plant, and Irene V. Blair, "Classic and Contemporary Analyses of Racial Prejudice," in *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Intergroup Processes*, ed. Rupert Brown and Sam Gaertner (Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2001), 200.

<sup>13</sup> Rupert Brown and Sam Gaertner, eds., *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Intergroup Processes* (Oxford, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2001), 200-201.

There's a double cost to every algorithmic audit study we, as young Black women, conduct. One challenge is the issue of articulating with evidence the reality of a technological deployment that doesn't work for *us*. This means everything from demonstrating that an app labels photos of *our* Black faces as 'gorillas' to vocalizing how social media moderation filters censor *our* essential phrase, like 'Black Lives Matter.' Conducting this kind of research means systematically proving how racial prejudice perpetuated by criminal risk assessments disproportionately flags Black defendants – members of our community – as high risk while simultaneously raising their bail and keeping them in jail. It also means testing AI tools used in everything from hiring to housing to health care that may be skewed against our favor.<sup>14</sup>

Racial prejudice and systemic racism are inherent in American society. It shows up in everyday activities, including artificial intelligence, everyday technology, and the criminal justice system. The family and loved ones of the incarcerated are subsumed in a criminal justice system that may be inherently biased against them and their loved ones. Social psychology recognizes racial prejudice as a social problem. Although it is historically inherent in the American criminal justice system, what makes it so insidious is that it is covert and readily denied. The subtle, undercover patterns of racial behavior harm the recipients of the behavior, in this case, the African American communities. Racial prejudice is a contemporary issue and warrants great concern in the United States of America. The Republican Presidential campaign in 2016 and 2020 gave rise to openly white supremacist organizations exhibiting and escalating large-scale racial hatred. This matter of prejudice has been hovering over the lives of African Americans since slavery and post-Emancipation to the civil rights movement and persists in the present. Racial prejudice, unfair treatment, disenfranchisement, and memories of decades of poverty due to inferior treatment persist in the African American community. The war on drugs

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<sup>14</sup> Deborah Raji, "Facing the Tech Giants," in *The Black Agenda: Bold Solutions for a Broken System*, ed. Anna Gifty Opoku-Agyeman (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2022), 127-128.

ushered in racial profiling, over-policing, no-knock warrants, and excessive and lengthy sentences for drug dealing and drug addiction resulting in mass incarceration. It is not surprising that the problem of racial injustice and prejudice in the United States government has spilled over into the United States criminal justice system.

Mass incarceration is arguably the most pressing and protracted social crisis of postindustrial America. The imprisoned population in the United States has exploded from 200,000 people in the early 1970s to 2.3 million people in the first decade of the twenty-first century, including 95,000 youths under the age of eighteen. To accommodate this colossal movement toward confinement, close to one thousand prisons have been built throughout the United States since 1973. 'Short of major wars,' writes criminologist Elliot Currie, 'mass incarceration has been the most thoroughly implemented government social program of our time.'<sup>15</sup>

### **Interdisciplinary Theme: Cultural Trauma**

Racial prejudice, as a vast social problem, drives the growth of mass incarceration in the U. S. The result is an epidemic proportion of cultural trauma in the African American community as families and loved ones of the incarcerated grapple to deal with the injustice and loss of those who are incarcerated. This is particularly devastating and traumatic for the African American mother who has African American sons coming of age in the African American community. Anxiety and panic are present in the voice of the African American mother and father as they explain what should be done if the African American son encounters the police when driving while Black, shopping while Black, or dining while Black. Sleeplessness and heart palpitations are experienced by the African American mother when the African American son misses curfew, or worse, does

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<sup>15</sup> Brady Heiner, "Excavating the Sedimentation of Slavery: The Unfinished Project of American Abolition," in *Death and Other Penalties: Philosophy in a Time of Mass Incarceration* (Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2015), JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt14jxrhw>.



not come home at night. The reality in the African American community is that any encounter with the police can turn into a traumatic event.

The concept of cultural trauma thereby becomes a heuristic device to ask questions about events that shock the foundations of a social world, destroy a social fabric, and entail a loss of identity and violation of fundamental cultural presuppositions. The work of Cathy Caruth, (*Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*, 1996), informs the analytical angle throughout this volume, and provides, as it were, a blueprint to make the leap from psychological trauma to cultural trauma. Cultural trauma is then explored through concepts such as collective memory and identity, collective repression and guilt, or collective consciousness.<sup>16</sup>

Euro-Americans commemorates September 11, post-communism, and celebrate the commemoration of the Holocaust; however, Euro-Americans are rather pinch-lipped when it comes to the history and aftermath of slavery. The history of cultural trauma in African Americans goes back to the implementation of the slave trade and the trauma inflicted on African American families during slavery and going forward. Cultural trauma will provide an overview of the impact of the horrors and atrocities of slavery on the African American family and culture in the United States of America. The cultural trauma from slavery, emancipation, reconstruction, the Jim Crow era, and the Civil Rights era is evident in African American history in the United States and is present in twenty-first-century American society. Ron Eyerman, in his book *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity*, posits the concept of cultural trauma in the formation of African American identity from Emancipation to the Civil Rights movement as follows:

The trauma in question is slavery, not as institution or even experience, but as collective memory, a form of remembrance that grounded the identity-formation of a people . . . As cultural process, trauma is linked to the formation of collective

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<sup>16</sup> Jeffrey C. Alexander et al., "Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity," in *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 14, no. 2 (June 2008): 465, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20203670>.

identity and the construction of collective memory. The notion of a unique African American identity emerged in the post-Civil War period, after slavery had been abolished. The trauma of forced servitude and of nearly complete subordination to the will and whims of another was thus not necessarily something directly experienced by many of the subjects of this study, but came to be central to their attempts to forge a collective identity out of its remembrance . . . Orlando Patterson (1998, 40) writes, ‘Another feature of slave childhood was the added psychological trauma of witnessing the daily degradation of their parents at the hands of slave holders . . . to the trauma of observing their parents’ humiliation was later added that of being sexually exploited by Euro-Americans on and off the estate, as the children grew older.’ By the mid-1880’s the Civil War had become the ‘civilized war’ and ‘a space both for sectional reconciliation and for the creation of modern southern whiteness’ (Hale, 1998, 67). As the nation was re-membered through a new narration of the war, blacks were at once made invisible and punished. Reconstruction and blacks in general were made the objects of hate, against which the two sides in the war could reunite. The memory of slavery was recast as benign and civilizing, a white man’s project around which North and South could reconcile.<sup>17</sup>

The book, *Quiet as Kept*, focuses on the role of shame and trauma as it looks at issues of race, class, color, and caste in the novels of Toni Morrison, the Nobel Prize-winning author. This book will inform this paper as it draws on and extends recent psychoanalytic and psychiatric work of shame and trauma theorists and offers an in-depth analysis of painful and shameful race matters. Providing a frank and sustained look at the troubling, if not distressing, aspects, this book provides uncomfortable confrontations with matters of race as it explores the issues and plight of Black Americans. Cultural trauma informs the doctoral project as it gives assent to the overview of the trauma of slavery and the horrors of racial prejudice and oppression that lend itself to the identity formation of the African American community and the family of the incarcerated.

Nobel Prize-winning author, Tony Morrison, describes the pervasiveness of racism and the painful awareness of a sense of shame, contempt and disgust inflicted on African Americans. Brooks, in the book *Quiet as Kept*, elaborates on

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<sup>17</sup> Ron Eyerman, “Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American,” in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Cambridge, NY: University of California Press, 2004), 60-64.

Morrison's detailed narrative on the effects of cultural trauma on the African American family and community. In novel after novel, as Morrison draws attention to the damaging impact of white racist practices and learned cultural shame on the collective African American experience, she points to the shaping and shaming power of corrosive racist stereotypes and discursive repertoires in the construction of African American identities as racially inferior and stigmatized.<sup>18</sup>

### **Interdisciplinary Theme: Social Cognitive Theory (and a brief insert on Social Disorganization Theory)**

The work of social psychologists includes the use of cognitive theories. Dr. Aaron Beck developed Cognitive Behavior Theory (CBT) in the 1960s and 1970s, and it is considered the “gold standard” of psychotherapy today (David et al., 2018). Judith S. Beck, PhD, president of the Beck Institute for Cognitive Behavior Therapy and daughter of Dr. Aaron Beck, writes the following:

It's (CBT) based on the theory that people's thinking influences their emotions and behavior. By helping their clients evaluate and change dysfunctional or unhelpful thinking, CBT therapists can bring about lasting change in mood and behavior. CBT therapists employ techniques from many different psychotherapeutic modalities, applied within the context of the cognitive model and of their individualized conceptualization of their clients. A recovery orientation focus has recently been added to traditional CBT, emphasizing values and aspirations, drawing positive conclusions from their day-to-day activities, and experiencing positive emotion in and outside of the therapy session.<sup>19</sup>

The foundation of cognitive theories surmises that mental activities determine social behavior.

These mental activities, called cognitive processes, include perception, memory, judgment, problem solving, and decision making. Cognitive theory does not deny the importance of external stimuli, but it maintains that the link between stimulus

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<sup>18</sup> J. Brooks Bouson, *Quiet as Kept: Shame, Trauma, and Race in the Novels of Toni Morrison*, SUNY Series and Psychoanalysis and Culture (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), np.

<sup>19</sup> Judith S. Beck, *Cognitive Behavior Therapy: Basics and Beyond* (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 2021), 14.

and response is not direct; rather, the individual's cognitive processes intervene between external stimuli and behavioral responses. Individuals not only actively interpret the meaning of stimuli but also select the actions to be made in response.<sup>20</sup>

The doctoral project proposes a forum to provide resources and support to the families and loved ones of the incarcerated. The focus of this forum would garner resources and support for the families and loved ones of the incarcerated. The doctoral project encourages communication with the families and with the community to determine the areas that most need the support. Moreover, the proposed forum posits providing families and communities with tools for self-discovery and self-knowledge. The enneagram is one tool that provides a self-evaluation test for different personality types. The Athenian moral philosopher, Socrates, said, "Know thyself."<sup>21</sup> When people can know and understand their own feelings, and discover their strengths and weaknesses, then they can begin to communicate effectively with their incarcerated loved ones.

A central theme of classical social theory has been the dynamic, interactive, and reciprocal relationship between the self and society (Mead 1934). Contemporary social psychologists, building on this long-standing tradition, have suggested that individuals' evaluation of their perceived efficacy is an important component of the self-concept (Gecas 1989). Bandura's (1986:391) social cognitive theory defines self-efficacy as 'people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances,' and a large and growing body of empirical research has linked efficacy beliefs to a host of personal well-being outcomes (for reviews, see Bandura 1982; Scheier and Carver 1992). While the results from this body of research are not univocal, in general, they indicate that high self-efficacy imparts positive effects on individuals, whereas low self-efficacy contributes to deleterious behaviors and maladaptive social consequences.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> DeLamater, *Social Psychology*, 17.

<sup>21</sup> Socrates, quote, in "History of Greece and Rome," <http://www.antiquitatem.com/en/know-thyself-socrates-plato-philosophy/>.

<sup>22</sup> Jason D. Boardman and Stephanie A. Robert, "Neighborhood Socioeconomic Status and Perceptions of Self-Efficacy," *Sociological Perspectives* 43, no. 1 (Spring, 2000): 117-118.

The information, resources, and support provided through the doctoral project is intended to support the families of the incarcerated in a manner that will empower them to be supportive of their incarcerated loved one during and after their sentence. The forum proposes a platform to guide the families through a difficult time by providing a learning experience and a facility to bring them through grief and isolation, while enabling them to understand the process of incarceration with those whose experience can lend to their situation. Once the families deal with their grief and isolation, they can deal with the incarceration and look forward to reunification and reentry.

The task of imagining the future and creating a means for getting there has been addressed in particular in social cognition and in health psychology. In so doing, these two largely disparate fields have nonetheless identified the same fundamental parameters. Social cognition researchers studying self-regulation have noted that the management of affect and the initiation and maintenance of problem-solving activities are fundamental to moving oneself from a current situation toward an envisioned future one (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Similarly, stress and coping researchers, such as Lazarus and Folkman (1984), have maintained that people overcome the stressful circumstances of their environments through the initiation of problem-solving activities and the regulation of their emotional states, thereby creating a less stressful future.<sup>23</sup>

The family is the lifeline for their incarcerated loved one. An inmate in prison with no outside support is subject to demoralizing treatment. Without family support, the inmate is unable to provide themselves with basic hygiene such as soap, toothpaste, underclothes, blankets for the winter, moisturizer for parched lips, a book to read, and a phone call to hear the voice of someone who cares. These basic requirements can make an inmate feel somewhat positive about themselves in an otherwise debilitating situation. The lack of basic requirements can harm the mental well-being of any individual and can

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<sup>23</sup> S. E. Taylor, L. B. Pham, I. D. Rivkin, and D. A. Armor, "Harnessing the Imagination: Mental Simulation, Self-Regulation, and Coping," *The American Psychologist* 53, no. 4 (1998): 429.

be detrimental to their concept of self and to the way they present themselves during their incarceration.

According to Nick Haslam (2006), one method of dehumanizing people is to deny characteristics that make them uniquely human, including ‘civility, refinement, moral sensibility, rationality, logic, [and] maturity’ (257). By rejecting or minimizing these attributes in individuals or groups of people, we allow ourselves to think of them as less than humans. Once we believe they are subhuman, we give ourselves permission to treat them inhumanely.<sup>24</sup>

Social cognitive theory encourages positive behavior in the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. The domain of change in the families is projected to occur in the cognitive domain, where their thinking of hopelessness will be transformed into hope and encouragement. This, in turn, will encourage the families and loved ones to promote hope, civility, resilience, and encouragement to their incarcerated loved ones. The affective domain of change in the inmate will be the affective domain that will purport a change of attitude in the inmate, keeping them “humanized” and in good mental health.

The use of social cognitive theory in the doctoral project will encourage the creation of a safe space with confidentiality and trust for the families and loved ones of the incarcerated. This safe space is intended to break down barriers to communication and identify challenges and possible solutions for support to family and loved ones throughout the incarceration, the release, and the re-entry process. Once this safe space is secured, the project coordinators will assess family priorities, identify family challenges, whether they be drug addiction, alcohol addiction, unemployment, or poverty, and identify agencies, and organizations that offer the necessary support. Throughout the

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<sup>24</sup> Margaret Graham, “Humanizing American Prisons,” *Extraordinary Partnerships: How the Arts and Humanities are Transforming America*, ed. Christine Henseler (Amherst, MA: Lever Press, 2020), [https:// www.jstor/stable/10.3998/mpub.11649046.14](https://www.jstor/stable/10.3998/mpub.11649046.14).

doctoral project, the context proposes to collaborate and partner with community agencies and organizations and act as a liaison for pastoral care and prayer.

Another theory that comes to mind is the social disorganization theory. The social disorganization theory argues that crime is associated with social structural and socioeconomic characteristics that negate or reduce the ability of local groups and individuals to control criminal behavior.<sup>25</sup> Social disorganization theory recognizes that the ex-inmate is a stigmatized population and that the post-prison neighborhood environment affects recidivism (Hipp, Petersilia & Turner; Kirk 2009, Kubrin Stein 2010).<sup>26</sup> The family and loved ones of the incarcerated will be educated in regard to this issue.

. . . that incarceration channels individuals into more disadvantaged neighborhoods, and if disadvantaged neighborhoods are incubators for criminal behavior (Morenoff, Sampson, and Raudenbush 2001; Sampson and Groves 1989; Warner and Pierce 1993), then a potentially important dynamic of the crime/disadvantage relationship becomes the churning of individuals between prisons and communities. That finding would be in line with the conclusion that some neighborhoods have become trapped in a cycle where crime and disadvantage mutually reinforce one another (see Hipp, Turner, and Janetta 2010).<sup>27</sup>

The family and loved ones need to know that mass incarceration has important implications for racial inequalities tied to neighborhood contexts and communities of origin. Because ex-inmates tend to be poor and less educated and tend to come from

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<sup>25</sup> Yuh-Yuh Li, *Social Structure, Social Control, and Crime in Rural Communities: A Test of Social Disorganization Theory*, nd, <http://dtl.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-communities/docview/622101997/se-2>.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Massoglia, Glenn Firebaugh, and Cody Warner, "Racial Variation in the Effect of Incarceration on Neighborhood Attainment," *American Sociological Review* 78, no. 1 (Feb 2013): 142-165.

<sup>27</sup> Massoglia, Firebaugh, and Warner, "Racial Variation in the Effect of Incarceration on Neighborhood Attainment," 142-165.

disadvantaged neighborhoods, they experience limited choices for residential options due to their incarceration. Because ex-inmates are susceptible to broken relationships and increased possibilities of divorce, the place they called home before prison may not be available upon release.

The historically novel rise in incarceration, mostly resulting from increased harsh sentencing policies for nonviolent offenses, has had profound implications for the lives of American men . . . Incarcerated men experience a liminal stage that likely complicates the maintenance of romantic relationships. Liminality, which was initially developed to describe a stage in the ritual process (e.g., religious rituals, coming-of-age rituals) but has since been applied to other domains, refers to the individuals who are ‘neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the position assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremony’ . . . Liminal individuals have no fixed social role and are often sequestered. In such a conception, incarceration is liminality, *par excellence* . . . For incarcerated men, their role in family life, in particular, becomes suspended between what they left behind and an unknown future. Despite the commonality of romantic relationships among incarcerated men, as well as some women’s commitment to maintaining relationships with incarcerated partners, sustaining a relationship while one partner is behind bars is complicated. Incarcerated individuals are essentially held captive and, as such, have limited, regulated, and institutionalized contact with romantic partners.<sup>28</sup>

Family and loved ones need to be prepared to address the situation regarding constrained residential options. I will encourage the family and loved ones to provide data pertaining to the loved ones’ pre-prison residence and encourage them to seek alternative residences if necessary.

Because ex-inmates have limited or lack socioeconomic resources, they are categorized as socially marginalized and are targeted and excluded from certain communities. Their living arrangements will be closely monitored due to parole requirements. They may face housing discrimination that is sometimes legally

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<sup>28</sup> Kristin Turney, “Liminal Men: Incarceration and Relationship Dissolution,” *Social Problem* 62, no. 4 (November 2015): 501, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44014873>.



sanctioned, especially in the case of those designated as sex offenders. If the ex-inmate served time for drug crimes, they are banned from affordable public housing. The result is that economically marginalized ex-inmates are relegated to the most disadvantaged neighborhoods. The state provides limited and short-lived safety nets and resources for the ex-inmate, and as time passes, the assistance provided is reduced and eventually eliminated or depleted. After the period of assistance ends, the responsibility for re-entry falls on the family, the church, which can offer a forum of spiritual guidance, direction, and prayer, and the community agencies that offer transitional planning.

This doctoral project will focus on the family as they maneuver through the process of supporting their incarcerated loved ones. It will identify agencies and organizations for the family and loved ones that offer support for ex-inmates. It will collaborate and partner with community agencies and organizations that can provide resources for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. It will liaise with the context for pastoral care and ministerial support.

For ex-offenders, having been incarcerated and having post-incarceration restrictions and stipulations overshadows their newfound liberty and threatens their freedom. Although they have served their sentence in prison, it is not the end of their punishment. The punishment continues after they are released in the form of stigmatization and marginalization that leaves them permanently marked as an outcast to society, unworthy of redemption. Their family and loved ones are also stigmatized by association. This project seeks to assist the family in overcoming the obstacles of stigmatization through the integration of social cognitive behavior theory, self-evaluation, and self-care.

Gayle Rhineberger updated the social disorganization theory in order to clarify and validate the theory. She makes some corrections to the research of Morenoff and Raudenbush (2001) and Sampson and Groves (1989) and refines the data and criteria for the theory development. I am in agreement with Gayle Rhineberger's challenge of the research of Morenoff, Sampson, and Raudenbush (2001) and Sampson and Groves (1989) and find her methods plausible. The outcome is that she finds Morenoff, Sampson, and Raudenbush (2001) and Sampson and Groves (1989) research not to be thorough in their data collection and methods. She also states that there is some validity to Morenoff, Sampson, and Raudenbush (2001) and Sampson and Groves (1989); at the same time, she lays out methods for improvement to the neighborhoods and introduces methods for improvement and reflection. One variable of data that was analyzed in Gayle Rhineberger's research was informal control. She found that where there was proper socialization in the community, such as youth centers, youth recreation programs, and after-school programs that provided activities and opportunities for youth, particularly young men, it prevented them from delinquent behavior in the community.<sup>29</sup> Whereas I agree with Gayle Rhineberger on the conclusion of the informal controls data, I would require these studies to include more variables in the social disorganization research based on systemic disenfranchisement in the African American community as a result of socioeconomic disparities, including redlining, the war on drugs initiative, and educational disparities.

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<sup>29</sup> Gayle Rhineberger, "Social Disorganization Disorder, Social Cohesion, Informal Controls, and Crime: A Reformulation and Test of Systemic Social Disorganization Theory," Dissertation, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI: 2003, 2-5, 27-30, 227.

The social disorganization theory informs the doctoral project and is important information that needs to be made available to the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. The knowledge of these theories can perhaps motivate community leaders to action that will decrease and eventually prevent future disorganization in their community and thereby perhaps decrease and prevent future instances of criminal activity and over policing.

### **Conclusion**

The scripture focus of Luke 4:18-19 invites those involved in ministry to seek the Spirit of the Lord God for guidance and direction and is imperative to the doctoral project. This biblical passage relates to the doctoral project as it compels those ministering to the family and loved ones of those who have been incarcerated to rely on the anointing of the Lord to uplift and encourage them to be positive advocates. Jesus proclaims He has come to set the captives free and release the prisoners. This entails more than physically opening the prison doors. The pericope proclaims, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.” To be free from sin is to be truly free, and only the Lord has the power to deliver this kind of freedom. The family and loved ones of those who are incarcerated are the brokenhearted, and only the Lord can put the shattered pieces back together.

The interdisciplinary theme of social psychology informs the doctoral project of the underlying indicators in society that target the African American community for mass

incarceration. The cultural trauma provides the basis of identity formation and gives credence to and understanding of the reason for pervasive poverty and crime affecting the African American community.

The social cognitive theory defines the behavior and subsequent actions of the incarcerated and their families and loved ones. Social cognitive theories also provide changes in thinking, feeling, and actions that can assist families in supporting their incarcerated loved ones during their sentence and in the reunification and reentry process. The doctoral project proposes to present a workshop for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated that will provide a safe place for them to dialogue about their experience of having family and loved ones in prison and how it affects the family and community dynamic. The support group is intended to affect their cognitive and affective domain by reflecting a change in their thinking about their feeling of isolation and realizing they are not alone in the journey. The workshops and presentations will educate them on policies and nuances affecting their community and the mass incarceration system that will alter their affective domain by reflecting a change in their feeling and attitudes with respect to their situation as the family and loved ones supporting their incarcerated loved ones. If the participants of the support group indicate an ongoing requirement for a support group forum, the support, encouragement, enrichment, and development derived from the formation and continuation of a support group will foster a cognitive domain and bring about a change in the action of the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. The ethnographic interview will study family members who have loved ones who are incarcerated. As the family members and friends involved in the support groups discuss their individual experiences and feelings about having a loved one who is incarcerated, it

will give insight into the issues that are at the heart of their distress. For instance, when an offender is punished for noncompliance, the punishment of not being able to use the phone to contact family is not only a punishment for the inmate; it is a punishment for the family and loved ones of the offender. This highlights the pain the family endures that is not taken into account by the prison officials.

The proposed methods, discussion, and analysis employed by this doctoral project were a pre-survey questionnaire, a post-survey questionnaire, an ethnographic interview, and focused journal assignments. A confidentiality form was signed by the participants to affirm that the activities of the support group were to stay within the support group and that any discussion about the support group outside of the support group forum was prohibited. The questionnaires included demographic, relational, and expectational inquiries about the family and loved ones' journey with the incarcerated. The ethnographic interview provided an in-depth interview with the family and loved ones of the incarcerated from the African American community. The ethnographic interview entailed individual and more intimate detailed discussion of the participants' experiences. The focused journal contained weekly assignments that were given after each workshop. The expectation was that they were to be returned to me at the last session; however, all of them were not returned as expected. This data was compiled and analyzed to assess the need for an ongoing support group.

Community agencies and organizations provided information and resources to families and loved ones of the incarcerated as well as provided assistance in advocating for their loved ones. The doctoral project hopes the support group and the community agencies will inspire family mentoring and self-discovery, as well as provide feedback

and debriefing to the family and loved ones in preparation for the reunification and reentry process. The doctoral project applied mentoring and cognitive theories that informed the doctoral project and affected change in the cognition, feelings, and behavior of the families and loved ones of the incarcerated as well as prepared them for reunification with the offender upon release. The completion of the Interdisciplinary Foundations was the culmination of the first five chapters and laid the foundation for the doctoral project. Completing this doctoral project enabled the researcher and context leaders, in collaboration with community agencies, to assist in the design of a support group model that encourages, assists, and informs the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **PROJECT ANALYSIS**

#### **Introduction**

Although it took many years before I accepted my call to the ministry, I was aware that God was present in my life and destiny. In the interim and as a ministry in its own right, I worked as a devotional leader in the church. The devotional leader's work would open every service with a hymn and a prayer. After the prayer, the service was open for testimony service. The devotional leader would direct the service, keep the service moving, and usher in the Spirit to direct the service of the Lord. They call this portion of the service "praise and worship," but the assignment of the devotional leader was so much more important. The devotional leader sets the tone for the preached word and prepared the people's hearts for the word of God. When you worship and praise God, your heart is prepared to receive the word of God. When your mind is elevated above your everyday circumstances and your flesh, you can receive God's spiritual message for your growth and spiritual insight. I loved my assignment as a devotional leader.

My first ministry assignment after accepting my call was visiting the sick and elderly in hospitals and nursing homes. We went out by twos. We used our experience as devotional leaders in the hospital and nursing home ministry. We would sing hymns and songs, read scripture, and pray and anoint the patients and their rooms. I enjoyed this ministry. The patients received us with joy. We would talk, fellowship, bring toiletries,

snacks, or other requested items, and leave them with a smile. We learned to limit the time when visiting the sick so as not to tire them out. We knew that we should not make them glad twice: glad to see us come and glad to see us go!

Sometime later, I began to participate in prison ministry. I used the skills I learned from being a devotional leader and from visiting the sick and shut-in and those in nursing homes. During my years in prison ministry, my ministry developed into a teaching ministry conducting bible studies and ministering to the prison inmates. One of the well-known advocates for prison ministry in the Dayton area was Reverend Betty Hill, who was affiliated with the Wesleyan Center in West Dayton. I had an opportunity to speak to her concerning prison ministry, and through the wisdom I garnered from her, I decided that prison ministry was not my current assignment. As time progressed, family members' incarceration began to press me to get involved somehow. As I began to discuss the family issues of mothers with incarcerated sons, the theme for the doctoral project began to develop.

A closer examination of mass incarceration in the community revealed that fathers, siblings, aunts and uncles, and children, as well as mothers, are greatly affected. My doctoral thesis and project were designed to incorporate the entire family and loved ones of the incarcerated into a support group forum to gauge the need for such a forum. The intent was to further include the churches, the community, and collaborating agencies in a forum of solutions for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.



*Hypothesis:*

The doctoral project titled, A Support Group Forum for the Family and Loved Ones of the Incarcerated, was conceived to address the problem of mass incarceration in the community of the context (concentrated in the African American community) that has a dire effect on the family and loved ones of those who have been incarcerated. This project contends that if the context leaders, in collaboration with community agencies, engage in a workshop to gauge the needs of the family and loved ones of the incarcerated, then a support group forum can be designed and implemented based on the project's outcome.

*Stakeholders: Context Associates*

We began with ten context leaders. Two declined to participate further. We began meeting in March 2023, briefly after church. This was the best way to get everyone present; however, this was the time that other auxiliaries also chose to meet. Time was limited as we are a small church, and the members participate in more than one auxiliary, making it time-intensive to hold meetings after church. We met four times from April to August 2023 after church to plan and implement the doctoral project and twice via phone. After I secured a facility at the Dayton Public Library West, the context leaders assisted in planning the workshop agendas and refreshments. Some took the lead in planning the refreshments, signing in the participants, and distributing and collecting the pre-survey questionnaires (see Appendix C). Others took the lead in setting up the workshops' conference room, including audiovisual and room setup. The demographics for the context associates were determined and noted. The participants were all African

Americans — seventy-five % female and twenty-five % male. The ages ranged from thirty-five to seventy-five. The income range fell between the \$25,000-\$34,999 range and the \$55,000-\$75,999 plus range.

*Stakeholders: Professional Associates*

I had three professional associates who poured into my project. Dr. Brenda Thomas was the first person I asked to be my professional associate. She was instrumental in encouraging me to participate in the Doctor of Ministry program at UTS. She laid out a foundation of the benefits of the academic program and the relationships forged through the focus group participation based on her matriculation through the UTS DMin program. Her encouragement and guidance were immeasurable as she offered consultation, reviewed, and advised on my documents. At the start of the second semester, she became critically ill and had to decline participation to take treatment and care for her husband, who also became critically ill. I continued in prayer for her as well as sending cards and messages of hope and healing throughout the illness, regretting that I could not do more than what was done. The second person I asked to be my professional associate was Dr. Bishop Derrick Johnson, the presiding prelate of the UHC Northwestern District. His encouragement and example allowed me to forge ahead on this project with the confidence that his prayers and expertise were always available to me. My third professional associate has been a beacon light in my life for some time. Dr. Wanza Jackson-Mitchell, Warden at the Warren Correctional Institute, recently retired in May 2023. I first met Rev. Dr. Wanza Jackson-Mitchell during a revival at Tabernacle Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio, where she spoke years earlier. When my son was

incarcerated, she was the first person I felt comfortable enough to contact, talk to, and get an understanding of what I should do as a parent with an incarcerated loved one. I was overjoyed that she took time out of her busy schedule to talk to me. When I asked her to be a professional associate, she did not hesitate and invited me to visit the Warren Correctional Institute in Mason, Ohio. She provided a wealth of information about the Ohio Department of Correction and Rehabilitation (ODRC). She also provided contact points for applicable agencies, including Kairos and local constituents. Dr. Wanza Jackson-Mitchell readily agreed to conduct a workshop for the doctoral project. Her presentation was inspiring to the participants. She put incarceration in perspective and gave hope to the participants who have family members who are incarcerated.

### **Methodology**

The research methods used for this doctoral project were qualitative. The qualitative research methods included questionnaires (see Appendix C and D), journal assignments (see Appendix I and J), and an ethnographic interview (see Appendix K). The questionnaire is an effective method of data gathering and provides a sampling of data that can be compared and analyzed to chart and graph the outcome of the data captured. There was a pre-survey questionnaire to begin the project. There was a post-survey questionnaire at the conclusion of the project. In addition to the questionnaire, participants were given thought-provoking questions after certain sessions and a journal to record their responses. The journal was collected after certain sessions and returned for the participants to complete the next sessions. The journal was collected after the final session. The participants were encouraged to use the journal to record additional

narratives and thoughts. The participants were asked to partake in an Enneagram assessment found at <https://assessment.yourenneagramcoach.com/>. The Enneagram evaluates each participant and gives them an understanding of the nine personality types for personal growth and strengthened relationships. The Enneagram was presented to assist the participants in their relationships and communication with their incarcerated loved ones. The journals were collected at the final session. Some requested more time to complete them. An ethnographic interview was conducted. An ethnographic interview is an in-depth interview with a family member with an incarcerated loved one. An ethnographic interview asks pointed and poignant questions that are answered with a narrative response. The ethnographic interview gives more detail to someone intimate with the subject of discussion. The data was triangulated to give the project a more reliable outcome.

### **Project Implementation**

This doctoral project encompasses a study that gauged the viability of a support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated in Dayton and Montgomery County, Ohio. Even with the current activity on prison reform, mass incarceration continues to be outstanding in the African American community. This project was developed because the families and loved ones of the incarcerated need a platform to express their views and concerns and an avenue to obtain information and inspiration. This platform was created in the form of a support group forum. The support group forum provided a safe place for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated to

gather and discuss their situation as well as gather information on agencies and information to assist them throughout their journey with their incarcerated loved ones.

The sixth chapter is an overview and analysis of the doctoral project. The doctoral project's duration was six weeks. It consisted of a series of workshop presentations and guest speakers. The doctoral project was held on Saturdays at the Dayton Public Library West from 11:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. beginning September 2, 2023, through October 7, 2023. There was one exception on September 16, 2023, when the workshop was rescheduled to September 17, 2023, at 1:30 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. at Mount Carmel UHC due to a scheduling conflict. A total of twelve participants were engaged in this doctoral project. Each session began with prayer and a welcome. We had an intermission between the PowerPoint presentation in order for the guest speaker and the participants to have a break with refreshments. I began each session with prayer. Sometimes, I prayed, and other times, I asked one of the participants to lead us in prayer. Each workshop session was set up for education, information, and inspiration. I began each session with a PowerPoint presentation to educate the participants on the doctoral project's purpose and the ministry focus. The first week covered an overview of the foundations of the doctoral project. The following four consecutive workshops presented a deep dive into the four foundations. The sixth and final workshop agenda summarized the doctoral project and included an overview of the Enneagram test taken by all participants.

#### *Week One: Session One*

Week one began with prayer and a welcome; immediately following, the participants filled out the confidential Informed Consent Form (see Appendix B) and the

pre-project questionnaire. A context associate collected all confidentiality forms and ensured they were properly signed and dated. They also distributed and collected the pre-project questionnaires. This first workshop consisted mainly of an overview of the doctoral project, including the project purpose, the abstract, the foundations of the doctoral project, and the ministry scripture focus, which would also begin all the following sessions. I showed how these four areas – biblical, historical, theological, and interdisciplinary – connect with and speak to the subject of loved ones incarcerated and the trials and stigma that they face while sharing how family members are also doing time in that they go through much pain, sorrow, and sometimes shame. I began with a PowerPoint presentation overviewing the Biblical, Historical, Theological, and Interdisciplinary Foundations. I quoted the scripture focus of the Biblical Foundations:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised (Luke 4:18, NASB).

I elaborated on the scripture that was spoken by Jesus upon His maiden voyage of His earthly ministry. This scripture defines Jesus' mission, and His mission was to preach the gospel to the sinners, the Samaritans, and the outcasts of society, which included tax collectors, women, and the marginalized. This socio-political atmosphere was oppressive to the group Jesus focused His attention on. The current socio-political atmosphere is oppressive to the family and loved ones of the incarcerated as well as the incarcerated.

I presented the Historical Foundations by giving an account of the history of the United States' prison system post-Emancipation Proclamation. This account included a brief history of the US prison system before the Emancipation Proclamation and a brief comparison.

The Theological Foundations was examined from the lens of soteriology, where the chosen themes of pastoral theology and minjung theology were defined and related to the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. I also introduced theological anthropology, defined the related theological themes, Black liberation, and womanist theology, and explained how each related to the doctoral project.

I gave a brief overview of the Interdisciplinary Foundations of cognitive behavioral theory. I let them know that the family and loved ones of the incarcerated cannot control the circumstances surrounding the incarceration of our family members or loved ones. Still, we can control how we act and react, conceive our situation, and move forward.

Session One concluded with an invitation for everyone to give an account of their experience with an incarcerated loved one. All did not participate; those uncomfortable sharing were not coerced.

### *Week Two: Session Two*

Session two concentrated on the Biblical Foundations. I asked one of the participants to open with prayer. After the sign-in, welcome, and doctoral project overview, we deeply explored the Biblical Foundations, Luke 4:18. In Luke 4:18, Jesus emphatically announces that the Spirit of the Lord is upon Him. This reference to the Spirit of the Lord in the launch of Jesus' mission implies the necessity of the Spirit and His anointing power and presence when embarking upon any ministry project. The importance of the Spirit's presence and anointing for this doctoral project was presented to the workshop participants. Jesus' directive to preach the gospel to the poor, including

the poor in spirit, drives this project and confirms that success can be accomplished through the anointed direction and guidance of the Spirit. Jesus states his mission included a command to heal the broken-hearted, which includes the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. Jesus is preaching deliverance to the captives through this project, which empowers the incarcerated family and loved ones with deliverance tools, including education, information, and inspiration. The education, information, and inspiration are intended to recover the sight of those blinded by the grief, trauma, and hopelessness of having a family member or loved one who has been or is incarcerated. Jesus has been sent to set at liberty them that are bruised, and through the doctoral project, the family and loved ones have been informed and educated on ways to inspire and inform their incarcerated loved ones while they are incarcerated to prepare them for reentry and reunification.

A few other scriptures were included in the Biblical Foundations presentation.

Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me' (Matthew 25:34-36, NASB).

This scripture was presented to the workshop participants to enlighten them on Jesus' admonition. He stated that as they had done to the least of these people, they also did unto Him. We also examined the following scriptures:

But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the gates of the prison, and taking them out he said (Acts 5:19, NASB).

And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter's side, and woke him up, saying, 'Get up quickly.' And his chains fell off his hands (Acts 12:7, NASB).



These scriptures were presented and discussed to advise the family and loved ones of the incarcerated that the Lord can and will deliver their loved ones from prison at His appointed time. The next scriptures we examined and discussed follow:

And when he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer (Acts 12:13, NASB).

But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them (Acts 16:25, NASB).

These scriptures emphasized to the participants the importance of prayer and being spiritually grounded throughout the journey with their incarcerated loved one.

After the Biblical Foundations' presentation, we were graced with a passionate speaker for the second half of session two. Our special guest, Ms. Jamie Gee, the Montgomery County Office of Reentry Manager, delivered a thought-provoking presentation entitled, "Let's Talk about Reentry." Ms. Gee introduced herself, the Montgomery County Office of Reentry (MCOR) staff, and the mission statement: "Serving the community with programs and services that minimize barriers to effective reentry while promoting public safety through the restoration of returning citizens" (see Appendix G). Ms. Gee informed us of her background, which led to her being selected to spearhead the program at its inception. She spoke of the trailblazers for the program, Judge Walter H. Rice and Commissioner Debbie Lieberman, and how the program is growing and evolving through collaboration and partnerships with like-minded agencies. Ms. Gee provided an overview of the Reentry Career Alliance Academy (RCAA) and outlined the workshop curriculum and class schedules. A sample of the workshop titles follows:

- Strength Finders
- Resume Workshops

- Stages of Change
- Financial Awareness: Goal Setting and Budgeting
- Networking with a Purpose
- Victim Awareness
- Social Responsibility
- Spirituality
- Healthy Habits

The above titles represent some of the workshops listed for the RCAA. Appendix E and Appendix F show a complete workshop schedule and the graduation dates of the different cohorts. Each cohort session schedule culminates in a graduation ceremony. In these graduation ceremonies, the returning citizens participate as master of ceremony, team lead, and collectively produce a poem from the Victim Awareness workshop session that is read at the graduation ceremony. These sessions prepare the returning citizen for reunification and reconciliation. Each encounter encourages the returning citizens to change their behavior and mindset and to develop community relationships.

Ms. Gee further introduced the “In The Meantime Support Group” (see Appendix G); the support group continues the relationship with the returning citizens by providing a forum for them to check in with other returning citizens and to continue to build community relationships and to be connected to the MCOR representatives for mentoring, networking, and resources. Ms. Gee stated that the MCOR serves as a surrogate family for the returning citizens who are not blessed to have family and loved ones waiting for them when they complete their sentence and return to the community. The participants were elated by Ms. Gee’s presentation and the programs and resources available to their incarcerated loved ones. They were given hope for their returning citizens to be successful in reentry. Participants were given a journal assignment as follows:

Please discuss how the workshop conducted by Ms. Jamie Gee, Manager, MCOR, has informed, impacted, and inspired you to dig deeper into finding resources for your incarcerated loved ones.

All handouts are included in the appendices. The session concluded with a period of questions and answers. Refreshments were available at the close of the session, and there was a drawing for a gift card.

### *Week Three: Session Three*

Workshop session three took place at Mount Carmel UHC due to a schedule conflict. It was scheduled from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. In the third workshop session, I expounded on the Historical Foundations chapter and presented the research that made up the historical foundation of the doctoral project. The presentation outlined the history of the United States penitentiary post-Emancipation. Prior to the Emancipation Proclamation, jails were small and were used to hold persons accused of crime until their hearing. They were then released to receive punishment or execution, depending on the crime. In the post-Emancipation era, The United States of America built prisons for punishment and hard labor. Black Codes were created. Black Codes were laws to intimidate and incarcerate the freed slaves. These laws were similar to the over-policing policies ushered in during the 1970s and 1980s when the powers that be declared the war on drugs on the African American community. With the over-policing that occurs today in the African American community, it seems the war on drugs never ended.

After the Historical Foundations overview, Dr. Wanza Jackson-Mitchell, the Warden of the Warren Correctional Institute, graced the session. Her presentation, in step with the history of the prison post-emancipation, was very informative and eye-opening

on the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) and exemplified life “on the yard.”

Dr. Wanza Jackson-Mitchell has served in the ODRC for thirty-three years. Her illustrious career began in Human Resources and included several “firsts.” She was the “first” woman and the “first” African American woman to hold the position of Deputy Warden of Administration, Warden at DCI, Warden at WCI, and Religious Services Administrator. She was honored as ODRC 2021 Warden of the Year. She shared with us that one of her duties as the Religious Services Administrator was to attend executions all over the state of Ohio. She walked with men on death row and provided support for the families. Although victim families were devastated, often, the death row prisoners’ families were also devastated because they did not commit a crime, but they were reviled as if they had. She learned God is everywhere, and every incident caused her faith to grow. She stated that in serving others, God used them to help her. They helped her value her life, her time, and the importance of family.

Dr. Wanza shared that her mother had six children; one became a warden, and one became a four-time offender. This affected how she operated. She often guided her actions with the thought of how she would want someone to treat her brother and realized if she wanted change that, she would have to be the change. She had the opportunity to do things differently, to do new things, to bring people along on her journey who felt as she felt and believed as she believed.

She looked at the prison as a community — a gated community. Within this community, she would have to provide the following services: commissary, quartermaster, twenty-four-hour infirmary, medical, dental, GED and community college

classes, substance abuse programs, and all services required within the community. Most people think the only service that is required is security. Dr. Wanza states that security is the number one priority; however, you must balance security with hope, or you will have a dangerous environment. Her job was to ensure the stability of the community. Her responsibility was to ensure the community continued to be a place of hope: a place of hope for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated, hope for the incarcerated who did not have hope for themselves, and hope for the mothers who were frustrated like I was. She stated that she took time to talk to the mothers of the inmates because mothers were calling to see about their children. She observed that it did not matter what a child would do, a mother still has hope for that child. She took time with the mothers because she hoped someone would take time with her mom.

Dr. Wanza emphasized her view of prison as a community and the need to provide people with tools to help them grow and develop and become better human beings. She observed a lot of hurt, pain, and devastation in the lives of people who talk about what happened to land them in prison. She found out that we are on the edge of going off, going crazy, and being unable to take things back. This has happened to many offenders who did not have the tools to prevent them from making bad decisions, especially if they were under the influence. We do not know how people end up where they are or how they could have done things differently. Many inmates have mental health issues, and COVID helped us all to understand that mental health is a real issue.

Within WCI, Warden Jackson-Mitchell started doing Transformation Tables, a six-week program developed by John Maxwell. Transformation Tables provide value-based leadership development content through a methodology that encourages self-

reflection and consistent action. The goal is to experience personal transformation at a foundational level before trying to bring transformation to others.<sup>1</sup> She would do Transformation Tables with the staff. The staff would do Transformation Tables with the offenders. And the offenders would do Transformation Tables with each other. Through Transformation Tables, John Maxwell talks about the greatness coming from being bigger on the inside than the outside. Transformation Tables address six foundational values: hope, listening, valuing every person, integrity, forgiveness, and multiplication.<sup>2</sup> She started empowering the men to have a voice on certain things that affected them. She felt a strong trait particular to being a female warden is empathy. She understands that people make mistakes for various reasons. If there is a possibility that they will get out of prison and back into society, the warden of the prison facility needs to help them obtain usable skills and set them up to be successful through education in vocational skills and ministry.

When Warden Jackson-Mitchell began her career, it was at the start of the prison boom that was relegated due to the war on drugs. Some good men were caught up in addiction. Many of these men were raised in the church and had a spiritual foundation. But between 1989 and the early 2000s, another unchurched generation began to populate the prisons. The challenges for her became different. She learned in that transition that you have to meet people where they are, and she became a mother to many grown men. She talked to them like they were her sons. She admonished them and encouraged them

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<sup>1</sup> Maxwell Leadership Foundation, “Transformed Lives, Transformed Communities, Transformed Nations,” <https://maxwellleadership.org/maxwell-transformation-process/>.

<sup>2</sup> Change Your World (CYW), “Create Positive Change In Your Life: One step at a time!” <https://changeyourworld.com>.

to talk about their issues. They respected her for being direct and honest. When she was doing Transformation Tables with the offenders, and they were talking about valuing others, a young man spoke up. He stated he did not know about valuing others because he did not know if he valued himself. It resonated with her because nothing matters when you do not value yourself. She felt she could help the staff and the offenders find out who they were. And she emphasized to the offenders, “You are bigger than what you did. What you did is not who you are. You are bigger than what you did!” She did the same thing for her staff and the offenders. Prison is no different from the police department or other similar places. She was adamant about holding people to a level of integrity. As a person in leadership, this was her priority. When people did wrong things, she held them accountable and established a standard for the facility.

The warden conceded that prison is hard work, and it is stressful. She did not know how stressful it was until she retired. The stress came from dealing with human life and with people struggling daily with their issues and environment. But she knew she had to do her job effectively in an environment where working with people takes a toll on you. When Warden Jackson-Mitchell retired, she stated that she felt relieved from stress. She saw some horrible things in her career in corrections and trying to live normally after thirty-four years in corrections was a difficult and different experience. Although a very successful career season was over, she knew she was not ready to just go home and do nothing. Thus, she decided to share what she learned with other people to help them in their careers, to be effective, and to be able to give hope to other people. She is now a consultant to the Department of Corrections in another state. She facilitates training where she conducts classes for new supervisors. She is proud of the opportunity to help

people process things differently from what she has learned. The session ended with a question-and-answer session.

Question: Are there a lot of gangs in the prison?

Warden: They are no longer gangs but security threat groups. However, there are community gangs where most groups are from regional affiliations; for example, the Dayton group consists of offenders from the Dayton area. The Cincinnati group consists of offenders from the Cincinnati area.

Question: Is there a surge in the number of Black females being incarcerated?

Warden: There is an increase but is not at the level of Black males. And let me state that women have a lot of needs and challenges. When women go to prison, their children are in jeopardy. Their children end up in devastating situations; for example, their children end up in children's services, or they end up living with the offender's parents or family who may not be able to afford to provide for the children because they are not given financial assistance from the state. These women feel guilty when they go to the commissary and their children do not have what they need.

Question: Are changes occurring in the prison system?

Warden: The system is changing because of what is happening in the prison community because of addictions, suicide, and mental health issues. We must realize what prison reform is. We must be involved. We must ask questions.

Warden Wanza Jackson-Mitchell concluded by encouraging the participants to talk to the warden. If you want to know more about your incarcerated loved one, you can also contact the inspector, the unit manager, and the chaplain. She encourages family and loved ones to take care of themselves and navigate through grief and trauma by seeking



available resources for family support and needs. She encouraged the participants to research and possibly volunteer for various prison ministries, such as Kairos Ministries International, which comes into the prisons and does weekend retreats; Wings International, a family support program that brings children into the prison to build relationships; and Crossroads, which brings gifts for children; and Prison Fellowship which provides services to offenders.

Warden Wanza Jackson-Mitchell informed, educated, and inspired the participants in the workshop session. The participants were inspired to seek available resources and act on issues affecting their incarcerated loved ones. Prison reform is happening, albeit slowly. Prison reform may be prompted by the judges, the state representatives, and public officials because it is no longer just an African American problem. Their sons and daughters are being incarcerated due to the opium epidemic. The constituents are contacting their public officials and demanding answers for what is going on inside of the prisons because of their families and loved ones being incarcerated. The participants were encouraged to contact their public officials, ask questions, and seek answers. Warden Wanza Jackson-Mitchell inspired the participants to contact prison officials and establish a relationship so that they could contact them and be informed of the status of their loved ones during their incarceration. This instilled hope in the participants that their incarcerated loved ones will be treated with respect and humanity.

#### *Week Four: Session Four*

Week four emphasized the Theological Foundations. The presentation introduced soteriology, the doctrine of salvation, with the theological themes of pastoral and

Minjung theology. Through the lens of soteriology, repentance, grace, and healing are examined in the themes of pastoral theology. The participants were given an overview of pastoral theology as the practical application of theology through preaching, teaching, and reaching the people with the word and message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The emphasis was for the family to seek spiritual guidance on their journey. And to advise them that even though their loved one will one day walk out of prison as a free person, they need to be free from the entanglements of sin that perhaps prompted their actions that landed them in prison. Minjung theology was presented to the participants because it emphasizes social justice in tandem with salvation. It emphasizes relief for the oppressed and marginalized and seeks *han* for the victim and the offender. In this session, I introduced theological anthropology, the doctrine of humanity, and its related themes of Black liberation and womanist theology. Black liberation theology also spoke to the mass incarceration in the African American community and how the church can become more involved in assisting the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. Womanist theology spoke to the Black women who are affected by mass incarceration and how they become the main supporters of the family and loved ones of the incarcerated without receiving support and assistance. We discussed the physical and financial burdens that Black women endure due to Black male incarceration. The session outlined carceral references in the Bible. It noted that twenty-four out of sixty-six books in the Bible were written from prison, exile, and captivity or about prison, exile, or captivity.

This session was completed with a presentation by Montgomery County Commissioner Debbie Lieberman. Commissioner Lieberman let us know that the MCOR is near and dear to her. In 2005, Judge Walter H. Rice approached her and said to her,

“We have a problem.” And he began to tell her that he would see children and grandchildren of the men and women who were incarcerated. He had a burden for these men and women and wanted to make sure that once they were released from prison, they would never go back. Commissioner Lieberman’s husband was also a criminal prosecutor, and he also noted the problem of mass incarceration. Commissioner Judy Dodge took her to several meetings, and they saw a lot of money coming into Montgomery County for the Second Chance Act. Still, that money was not being distributed to the county. It was going to nonprofit groups who were doing good work, but they only had the capacity to help a few people. They had a few successes in finding jobs for one or two people. At the behest of Judge Rice, the commissioners studied how they could find help for the whole community through what they call a collaboration of collective impact. Thus, the community, business leaders, and elected officials came together. After several years of pilots and programs, Judge Rice, Commissioner Lieberman, and the collaborative decided to open the MCOR. Ms. Jamie Gee came on board and started the whole program. Montgomery County may be one of the only counties in Ohio that truly invests in the work of reentry, and we do it with the two other commissioners, Judy Dodge and Carolyn Rice. Our goal is for everyone who comes out of prison to go through our program and have the opportunity to thrive as a returning citizen. We had an incredible speaker come to one of our meetings. He is the head economist at Fifth Third Bank. He wrote a book called “Untapped Talent.” It is about why we need to hire our returning citizens: they are untapped talent. The MCOR is doing an incredible job. Right now, we are at ten percent recidivism, which means ninety percent of our returning citizens are having a successful reentry. Only ten percent are

returning to prison. Before the pandemic, we were down to five percent recidivism.

Before Commissioners Lieberman and Dodge started this work, Montgomery County had a thirty-eight percent recidivism rate. This thirty-eight percent recidivism rate is based on prisoners returning to prison within three years of their release. However, when returning citizens go through the RCAA program, they have powerful stories. When they go to the RCAA graduation, they are impeccably dressed through a partnership with Clothes That Work. At the graduation they talk from the heart about their experience; they write and read poems; and they are given a book called *The Passport*, which contains all their certificates for the programs they have completed. We impress upon them that even though they have completed the program and graduated, the MCOR staff and mentors are still available to them to reach out and share their successes and struggles. Commissioner Lieberman would like to see enough volunteers so that every returning citizen can have a support person. Her presentation was an overview of the development of programs and policies to reform and reduce Ohio's prison recidivism while looking toward future initiatives. She thanked the family members who support their incarcerated loved ones and returning citizens. A question-and-answer session followed:

Question: Will you be expanding to Shelby County?

Answer: MCOR is doing a great job. They received \$94,000. With this funding, they have expanded to five counties: Montgomery, Preble, Greene, Miami, and Darke. The vision is to become a regional program funded by the general fund. We are figuring out ways to fund expansion. There are five regions in the state of Ohio. There are eighty-eight counties in Ohio. They have to look at funding and at counties that do not have coverage. Some counties have programs funded by non-profit organizations, and cities

fund some. Let us know if you have someone from Shelby County that you want to refer to the program. We have employees who provide “inreach” services in the prisons, and they can be considered for the MCOR. Returning citizens are the best employees because they want to make a difference in their communities. Three of the MCOR employees are returning citizens.

Question: (for me) How do you intend to get the word out about this support group forum for the family and loved one of the incarcerated?

Answer: This is my doctoral project. I am in the process of establishing a 501(3)c and getting a website developed. I have some concrete deadlines I have to meet for my doctoral project, and I am looking at the first of the year to begin going to different churches and community organizations to request an audience with their congregation and members to get the word out about the support group forum. I hope to do this in collaboration with Ms. Jamie Gee, manager of MCOR.

Commissioner Lieberman asked everyone in the room to get the word out about the support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated and the Montgomery County Office of Reentry. The presenter gave hope to the participants and prompted them to get involved with local prison reform for the benefit of the incarcerated population and their incarcerated loved ones. The participants were encouraged by the programs available to their incarcerated loved ones and were inspired to actively engage in programs and policies affecting them. We thanked everyone for coming. I gave the participants a journal assignment for the next session. We closed with prayer.

*Week Five: Session Five*

Week five introduced the Interdisciplinary Foundations. The session examined Cognitive Behavioral Theory as it relates to the criminal justice system, cultural trauma, and mass incarceration in the African American community. The presentation and discussions were based on the theory that people's thinking influences their emotions. Susan Hoffman Fishman stated that in 1978, there were 294,648 men in federal or state institutions, as well as 158,000 male inmates in county jails or workhouses (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1979).<sup>3</sup> She also stated that in most instances, when these men were sent away to prison, their loved ones "lost" their means of financial and emotional support, their personal privacy, and their reputation in the community.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the prevalence of this pressing problem and the seriousness of its effect on families, it has been historically overlooked by social workers and other social service professionals (Weintraub, 1976). Schwartz and Weintraub (1974) note that even correctional literature, programs, and legislation neglect to give serious attention to the problems of the offender's family.<sup>5</sup>

For these reasons, a support group forum will be formed to acknowledge and support the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. Through the Cognitive Behavioral Theory, we can surmise that if we can prompt them to change their thinking of defeat and hopelessness, they can feel differently about their situation. When this happens, they begin to respond and act accordingly. And vice versa, if they change their actions and response, it is possible for them to have a different feeling about their situation and the

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<sup>3</sup> In my presentation I reference Susan Hoffman Fishman who shared statistics on incarceration rates from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1979.

<sup>4</sup> Susan Hoffman Fishman, "Losing a loved one to incarceration: the effect of imprisonment on family members," *The Personnel and Guidance Journal* 6, no. 59 (1981): 372-375, <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2164-4918.1981.tb00572.x>

<sup>5</sup> Fishman, "Losing a loved one to incarceration," 372-375.

situation of their incarcerated loved ones, having their thoughts transformed in the process, hopefully in a positive manner.

If we can change our feelings by changing our thoughts, then the CBT approach can be a useful way to help someone overcome bad feelings,<sup>6</sup> especially in the case of the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.

We took a refreshment break, and the session continued with highlights from a returning citizen, a Program Coordinator, whose journey from incarceration to returning citizen inspired the group with hope for their incarcerated loved ones. The following is his presentation in his own words:

“I am on the DOC advisory council. But before I talk about me, I want to talk about my wife. My wife grew up going in and out of the prison as a young girl to visit her father who was incarcerated for attempting to murder her mother. It affected her greatly. She also had a brother who was in and out of prison most of his life. When I met her, I was in awe of her to hear her story. Through all that she went through, she never had a brush with the law, except maybe a traffic ticket. She is a wonderful citizen who has served our country. When I met my wife, I had to convince her that I was no longer ‘that person’ who was formerly incarcerated.”

“I looked at your son’s judicial, and I hope for him what happened to me. I hope he has that paradigm shift that says the following:

‘This is not the life I want for the rest of my life’

‘I no longer want to do this to my loved ones.’”

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<sup>6</sup> Hanan Parvez, “Cognitive Behavioral Theory (Explained),” <https://www.psychmechanics.com/cognitive-behavioral-theory-cbt-in>.

We do not see the sacrifices our loved ones are making. We are self-centered. We ask the following questions:

“Where’s my lawyer?”

“Where’s the money on my books?”

“Where’s the money on my phone?”

“Why is my ‘box’ taking so long?”

“I have a friend on death row who has been incarcerated for thirty-four years. His case has made it all the way to the Supreme Court, and they turned it down. When your case reaches the pinnacle and goes to the Supreme Court, and they turn it down, they give you an execution date. His execution date is March 15, 2027. He is a man of God. His faith is the only reason for his sanity. My faith is the only reason I am here now. You have to have faith in something more powerful than yourself to go through some of the things we put ourselves through. I came to the realization that God allowed me to survive, and with that realization, I stand before you.”

“When I first began looking for employment, I did not think I would be in the field of social work. I put in applications for seven months and never received a response. When I decided I would not check ‘that box; on the application, the calls began to come in. I received four job offers in one day. My first job as an apartment manager was very significant because that is how I got my first apartment. The employer did a credit check and decided to hire me. I was walking on pins and needles when I found out that the lawyer they used for evictions was the same prosecuting attorney who convicted me. Out of desperation, I called him. I told him I had changed and asked him to give me a chance because I needed this job. He said, ‘people make mistakes, and you don’t have to worry if



you keep it right.’ That was the first time anyone had given me a break. The law changed in April 2023, and I have been going to court to have my criminal convictions expunged. I want to introduce you to a young man who finished the MCOR program a year ago. He will talk about family and the importance of family to those who are incarcerated.”

We also heard from another young man who wanted to share his welcome home with his family. He will present in his own words:

“Good afternoon. I went to prison when I was seventeen years old, and I was in prison for twenty-five years. All I can say is ‘God is good!’ I have a good, supportive family. I went through the MCOR program and attended the RCAA. I tell everyone reentry is so important to the community. If returning citizens do not have the opportunity and the resources, they will return to what they know to survive. The MCOR program is important to the community and keeps it safe. I have a job working with youth. When working with them, I see myself in them and know I can give them something to help them make good decisions. It has been a struggle getting back into society and dealing with people. But I feel loved. My family was there when I was incarcerated, and they have been with me as a returning citizen. When I was in prison, I saw those who had no one to call, no one to send them anything, and no family relationships. A major part of rehabilitation is family. Reentry is also family. The Program Coordinator, RC1, from the MCOR has inspired me to keep going. His story and advice help with the decisions and actions you have to make. I am grateful for my family and for MCOR. MCOR is a major help to the family and loved ones of the incarcerated and returning citizens.”

I thanked both speakers; their stories were an inspiration to the participants.

MCOR is an integral part of support for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated because it gives them hope and resources and inspires them to act on behalf of their loved ones. Reentry and reunification are intricately woven into the family's journey with their incarcerated loved ones. In addition, those who partake in the MCOR program will have access to legal resources that can assist them in getting their records expunged. A support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated must consider all aspects of collaborative partnerships to connect the family and loved ones with programs and resources. We had drawings for gift cards, and the participants were assigned an Enneagram assessment for next week's final session. We concluded our session with prayer.

#### *Week Six: Session Six*

Week six finalized the doctoral project with a session on the Enneagram. The participants were asked to fill out an assessment prior to the session. The Enneagram is a tool to assist with determining personality types for self-awareness and growth. I did an overview on the nine personality types:

- Type One: The Improver/Reformer/Perfectionist
- Type Two: The Helper/Giver/Befriender
- Type Three: The Achiever/Performer/Motivator
- Type Four: The Individualist/Romantic/Artist
- Type Five: The Investigator/Observer/Theorist
- Type Six: The Loyalist/Skeptic/Guardian
- Type Seven: The Enthusiast/Optimist/Epicurean
- Type Eight: The Challenger/Protector/Advocate
- Type Nine: The Peacemaker/Mediator/Reconciler

The assessment aimed to make the participants aware of unhealthy habits and develop healthy interaction and communication habits with their incarcerated loved ones. Not everyone completed the assessment. Those who completed the Enneagram assessment identified as Type Fives, Type Sevens, and Type Nine. We discussed the positive and negative traits of the nine types and how they felt this information could strengthen their relationships with their incarcerated loved ones to give them hope for a better relationship and in-depth communication. The remainder of the time was allotted for the participants to complete their journal entries. Some requested more time to complete their journals. I had to schedule times to distribute and collect the post-survey questionnaires.

Biweekly drawings for gift cards occurred throughout the six-week sessions. Everyone in attendance received a gift card by the final session and a complimentary gift for the last day. I thanked everyone for their dedication and participation. We had refreshments and fellowship and closed with prayer.

### **Summary of Learning**

#### *Analysis and Data*

The doctoral project was scheduled for six weeks, consisting of six consecutive Saturdays at the Dayton and Montgomery County Library on Abbey Street in Dayton, Ohio. Information was distributed about the project by distributing flyers to individuals, churches, and community organizations, posting flyers on my Facebook page, and word of mouth. Attendance varied throughout the weeks. (Seventeen person started out and took the pre-survey questionnaire). The information was given to those not in attendance;

however, on average, the weekly attendance consisted of twelve participants. The venue was selected because it would be laborious for the church members to set up and clean up for the weekly workshops. As I frequented the library to research and pick up books, I noted the conference rooms and the setup. I observed that community organizations frequently used the conference rooms, so I inquired about them. The conference rooms were free to non-profit organizations, equipped with audio-visual equipment, and had an area conducive to bringing in refreshments. Unfortunately, the conference rooms were booked throughout July and August. They were available in September, and I scheduled them for six weeks. This arrangement worked out except for a few times when the library did not allow enough time between schedules, and we did not have enough time to complete our workshop and clear the room properly (between meetings).

On September 2, we convened, and I gave an overview of the doctoral project. A context leader passed around a numbered sign-in sheet, and this sheet was used to number the participants and as a future sign-in sheet. I let them know this project was a pilot or test to gauge the interest in a support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. I briefly discussed the project's Biblical, Historical, Theological, and Interdisciplinary Foundations and the impact it posed to the development of a support group forum. I passed out the pre-survey questionnaire, giving them time to complete the eight questions. The context leader collected the surveys and put them in a folder for me to compile the results. Seventeen participants filled out the pre-survey questionnaire. There were eight questions. The answers were chosen from a Likert scale ranging from a through e: a) Always, b) Often, c) Moderately, d) Rarely, and e) Never. The results of the eight questions are annotated in the pre-survey questionnaire section that follows.

### *Pre-Survey Questionnaire*

For question one: The family and loved ones offer financial support to the offender: zero percent answered “Never,” twenty-three percent answered “Rarely,” twelve percent answered “Moderately,” forty-seven percent answered “Often,” and eight percent answered “Always.”

Sixty-five percent offered some financial support to their incarcerated loved one. Twelve percent were moderately committed to offering support to their incarcerated loved one, twenty-three percent rarely offered support, and zero percent never offered support for their incarcerated loved one.

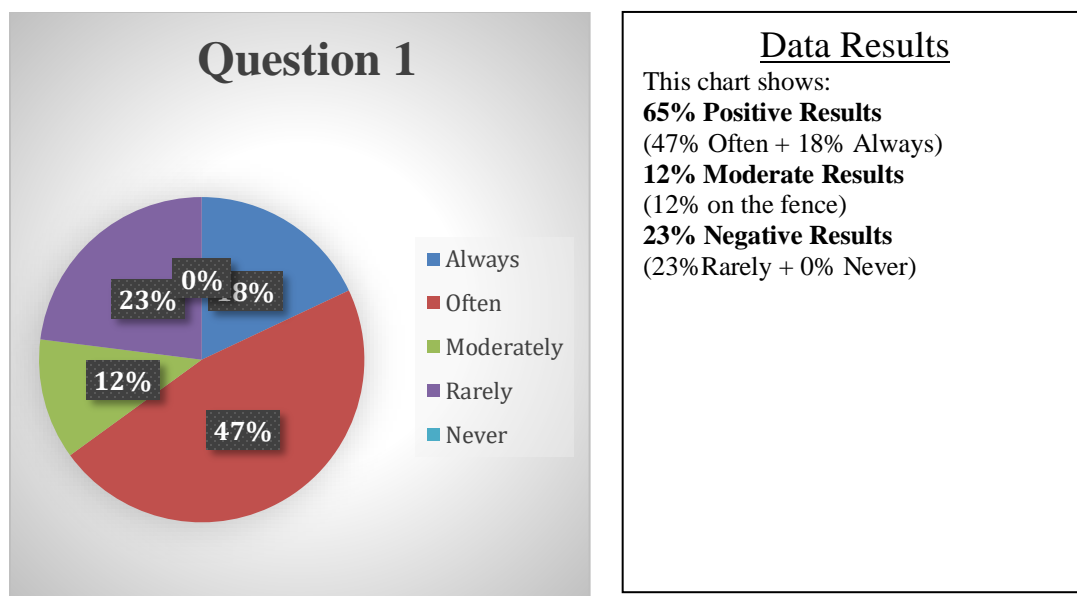


Chart 1: Pre-Survey Questionnaire Graph for Question 1 with Data Results

For question two: The family and loved ones are aware of resources to assist them as they support the offender: eleven percent answered “Always,” twelve percent

answered “Often,” eighteen percent answered “Moderately,” forty-seven percent answered “Rarely,” and twelve percent answered “Never.”

Fifty-nine percent of participants were not aware of resources available to them to assist them as they support their incarcerated loved one. Eighteen percent were not sure, and twenty-three percent were aware of resources and assistance.

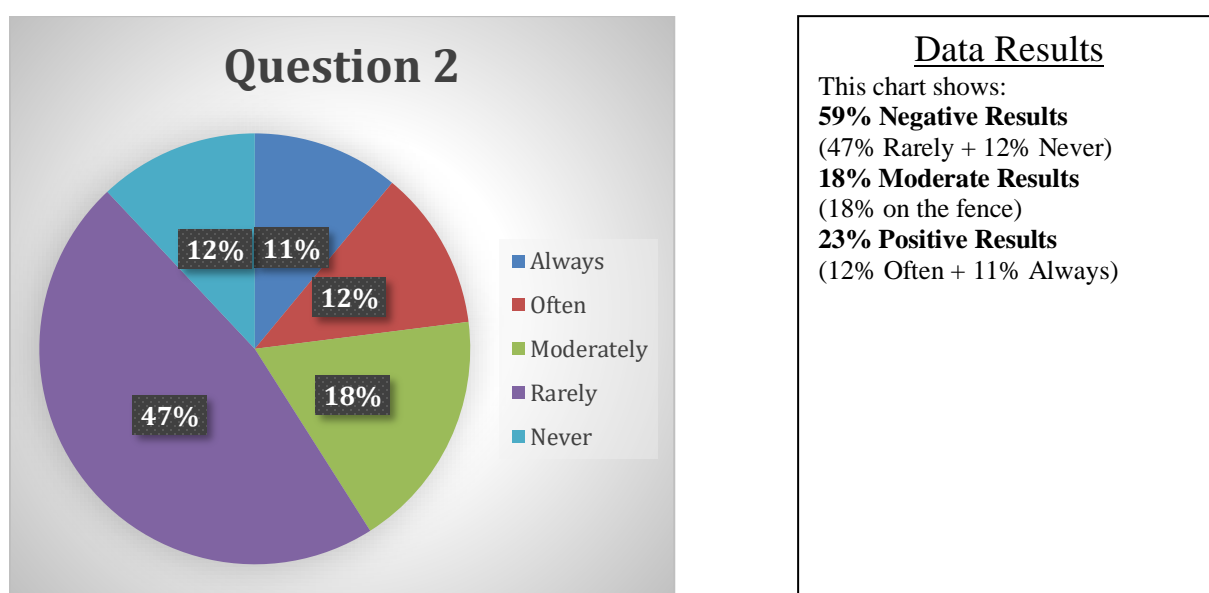


Chart 2: Pre-Survey Questionnaire Graph for Question 2 with Data Results

For question three: A support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated will provide many benefits for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated: forty-one percent answered “Always,” twenty-three percent answered “Often,” eighteen percent answered “Moderately,” twelve percent answered “Rarely,” and six percent answered “Never.”

Sixty-four percent of the participants had a positive response to forming a support group forum for the family of the incarcerated loved ones and felt it would benefit them. Eighteen percent were not committed to a negative or positive response and were in the middle. Eighteen percent thought a support group forum was not a relevant idea and would rarely or never provide a benefit to them.

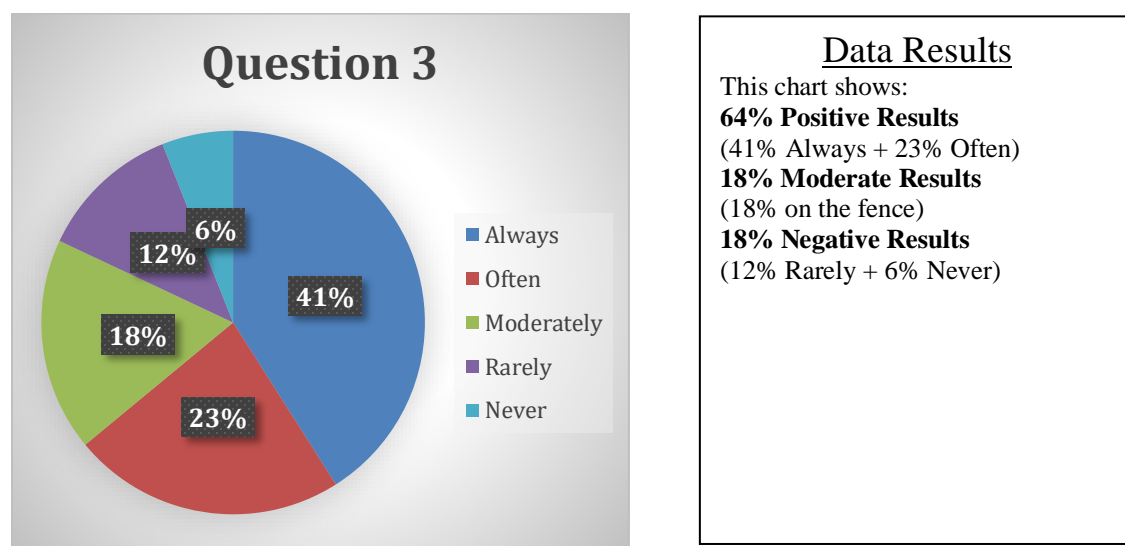


Chart 3: Pre-Survey Questionnaire Graph for Question 3 with Data Results

For question four: You can talk to people in the church, the community, and the workplace about your incarcerated loved ones: twenty-three and a half percent answered “Always,” twenty-three and a half percent answered “Often,” six percent answered “Moderately,” forty-seven percent answered “Rarely,” and zero percent answered “Always.”

The results for this question were almost evenly split. Forty-seven percent had a positive response, feeling they could talk to people about their incarcerated loved one.

Six percent were on the fence, and forty-seven percent felt a negative response was warranted for this question.

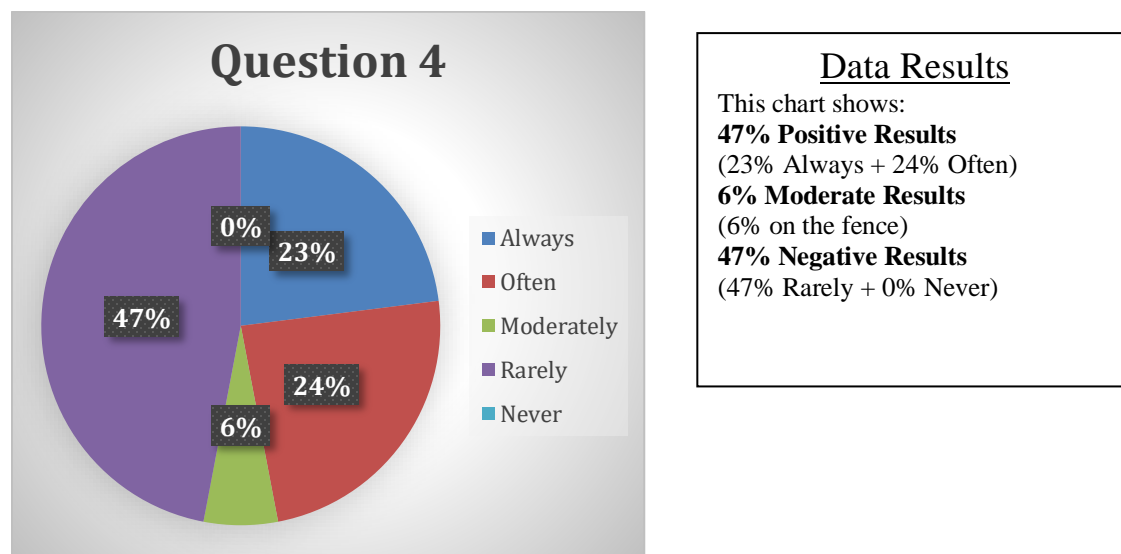


Chart 4: Pre-Survey Questionnaire Graph for Question 4 with Data Results

For question five: The church and the community should support and affirm the family and loved ones of the incarcerated: fifty-three percent answered “Always,” twenty-four percent answered “Often,” twelve percent answered “Moderately,” eleven percent answered “Rarely,” and zero percent answered “Never.”

Seventy-seven percent of the participants submitted a positive response to question five. They believe the church and the community should support the family. Twelve percent were on the fence, and eleven percent believed the community and the church should be exempt.



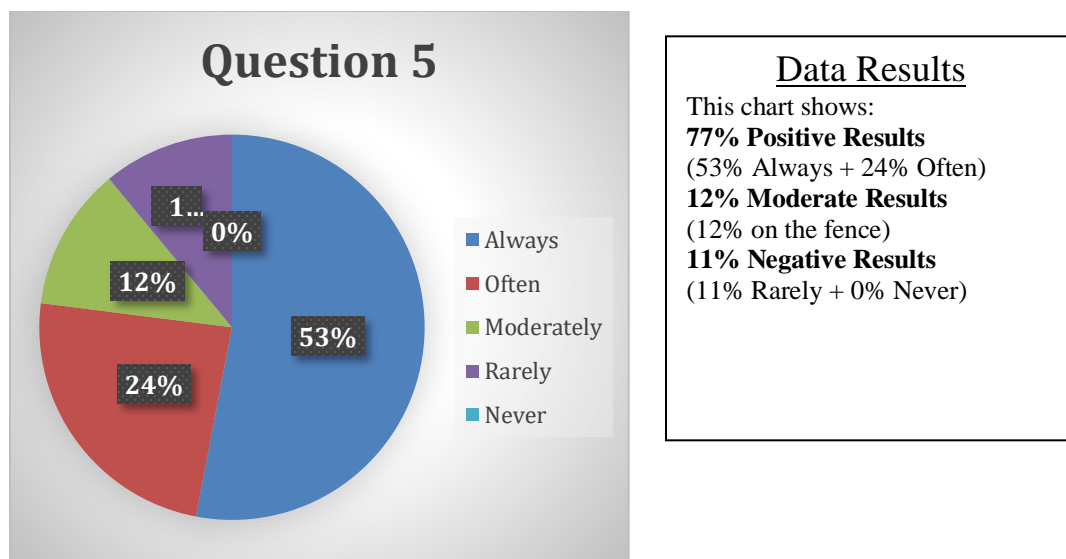


Chart 5: Pre-Survey Questionnaire Graph for Question 5 with Data Results

For question six: Prayer is an essential activity for you, the family, and loved ones of the incarcerated on your journey with the offender: eighty-eight percent answered “Always,” zero percent answered “Often,” twelve percent answered “Moderately,” zero percent answered “Rarely,” and zero percent answered “Never.”

An overwhelming eighty-eight percent of the participants responded positively to question six. They believe prayer is essential and that the family and loved ones of the incarcerated must trust in God throughout their journey. There were no negative responses.

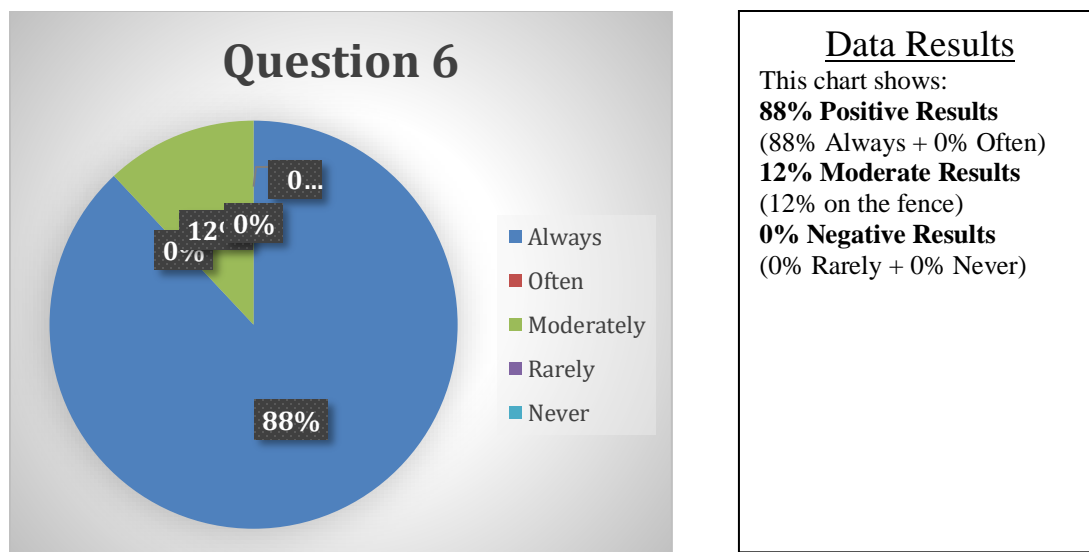


Chart 6: Pre-Survey Questionnaire Graph for Question 6 with Data Results

For question seven: You are aware of cultural trauma associated with mass incarceration: twenty-nine percent answered “Always,” thirty-five percent answered “Often,” thirty-six percent answered “Moderately,” zero percent answered “Rarely,” and zero percent answered “Never.”

The participants answered question seven with a sixty-four percent positive response. Thirty-six percent of the participants gave a moderate, middle-of-the-road response, and there were zero negative responses.

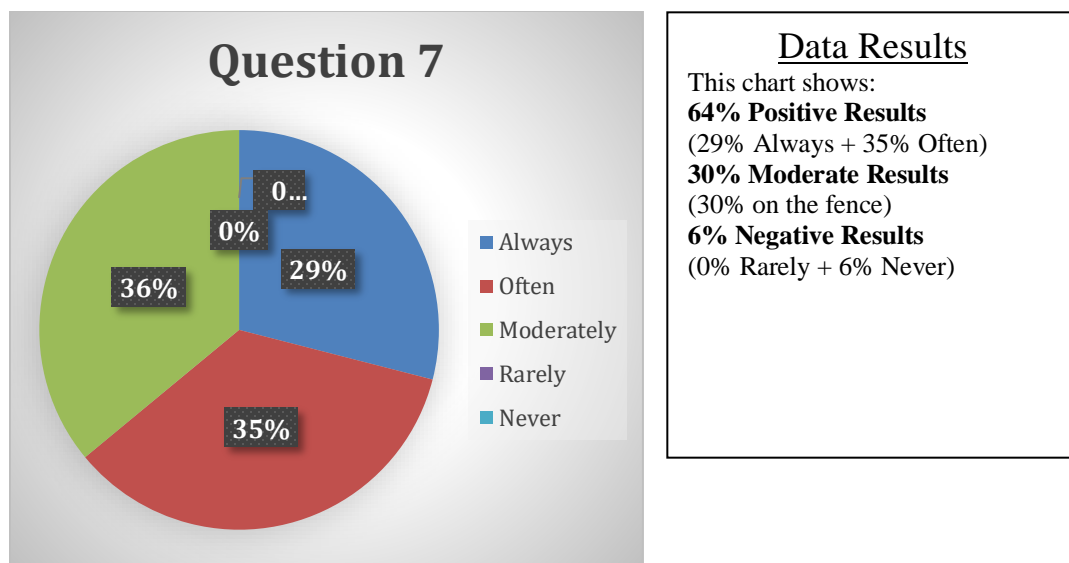
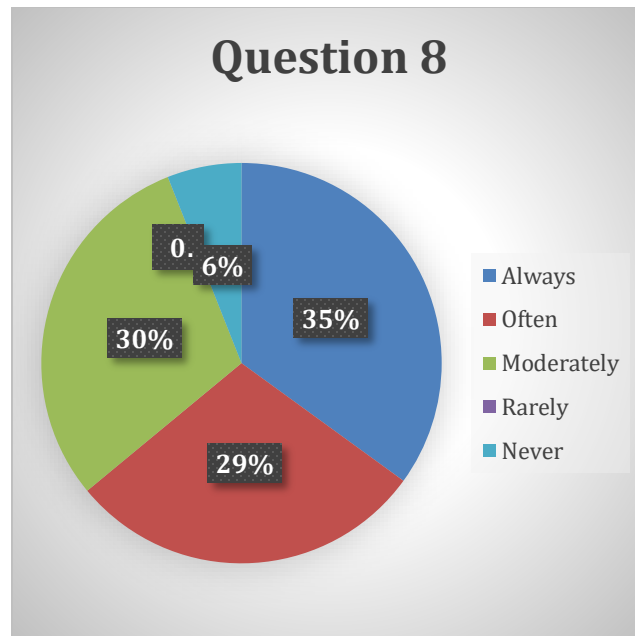


Chart 7: Pre-Survey Questionnaire Graph for Question 7 with Data Results

For question eight: Would you attend a support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated as a valid concept and future initiative: thirty-five percent answered “Always,” twenty-nine percent answered “Often,” thirty percent answered “Moderately,” zero percent answered “Rarely,” and six percent answered “Never.”

Question eight is a major question for this doctoral project. Sixty-four participants answered positively. Thirty percent were on the fence; they did not commit to attending. They will need more information and evidence of the need. Six percent gave a negative response citing they would never attend. Their reason was because their incarcerated loved one was released.



#### Data Results

This chart shows:

**64% Positive Results**

(29% Always + 35% Often)

**36% Moderate Results**

(36% on the fence)

**0% Negative Results**

(0% Rarely + 0% Never)

Chart 8: Pre-Survey Questionnaire Graph for Question 8 with Data Results

The overall results for the data obtained from the pre-survey questionnaire are depicted in the clustered bar chart below. It shows the graphic comparison for each question.

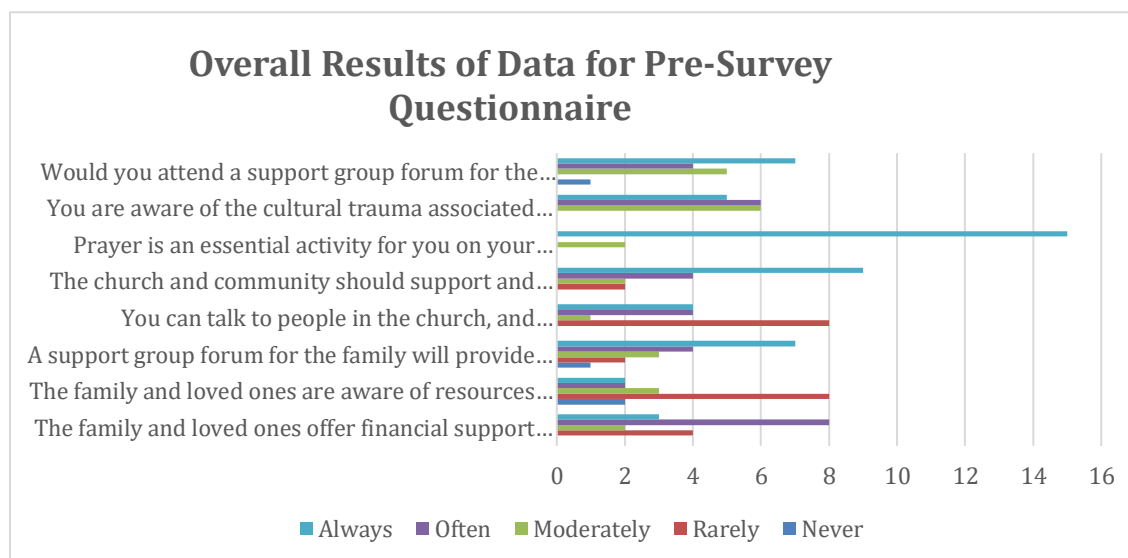


Chart 9: Pre-Survey Questionnaire Bar Chart for Overall Data Results

As the researcher and writer of this project and dissertation, I provided leadership to the context associates in presenting pre-workshop meetings to develop the doctoral project. The professional associates contributed to the workshop content and agenda. I collaborated with partnering agencies to find out how their mission could work with a support group forum for the families and loved ones of the incarcerated. I set up meetings to secure the workshop speakers and to brief them on the purpose of the doctoral project. I developed the workshop content for teaching and leading on incarceration, reunification, and reentry. The pre-survey questionnaire set the baseline for a measure of

the success of the doctoral project. The post-survey questionnaire results determine the success of the doctoral project.

### *Focused Journal Assignments*

Focused journal assignments were given to the participants after each session. The participants were given journals to elaborate on the assigned questions and the guest speakers. These assignments were given to the participants near the end of each session. They were allowed to take their journals home to complete the assignments. The journals were supposed to be brought with them to each session. The participants returned to the sessions with their journals; however, the assignments were not completed. In retrospect, I should have allowed an extra fifteen minutes at the end of each session to complete the focused journal assignments. Needless to say, I did not receive the response I hoped for from the participants in regard to the focused journal assignments. The questions and assignments are included in the appendix as Focused Journal Assignment 1 (see Appendix I) and Focused Journal Assignment 2 (see Appendix J).

A few responses can be noted, starting with the focused journal assignment 1 for week one. Question one dealt with familial relationships. Participant one said they provided money for their incarcerated loved one, visited them, and raised their children. The participant had a relationship with three offenders. One was her father; one was her daughter; and one was her grandson. In the case of the offender being her father, there were five siblings affected by the incarceration. The relationship between the father and the children was not healthy, and there was no therapy for the children. In this case, the father was incarcerated for murdering the participant's mother. No help was afforded to

the participant, who was a child at the time of the father's incarceration. The participant raised three children in the case of the offender being her daughter. In this case, there was therapy and love provided for the children of the incarcerated daughter. The daughter was on drugs and was very vindictive towards her. The participant stated that the daughter also seemed to have hatred towards her. However, the relationship did improve over the years. Participant six stated he offered the offender money and a job upon release. The offender was a cousin who did not have any children. Participant two stated they supported their incarcerated loved one by offering mental, physical, financial, and spiritual support. They stated they were "there" for them and advocated for them outside the prison walls. The offender was this participant's sister, who had a son then. They stated the offender gave up her son when he was one and a half years old. The oldest sister raised the son so the offender could have a continued relationship with the son. The participant also had a relationship with the sister's son, stating that she talked with the child and helped to provide for him.

The questions for week two dealt with prayer and church. Participant two stated that she is a church member and can discuss her incarcerated loved one among her church family. She further stated that her offender attended church all her life but stopped attending when she became an adult. The offender believes in prayer and requests prayer in time of need. The participant believes in prayer. She believes prayer can change things. She believes prayer can change your mindset, which can change your behavior. She believes prayer can give you inner peace and strength and help you get through any situation. Participant six stated he attended church; however, he declined to answer any other questions. Participant eleven attends church and does talk about their incarcerated

loved one in church. Her offender was raised in the church and believes in prayer but does not pray as he should. Participant eleven believes in prayer wholeheartedly. Participant nine attends church and has talked with church and family members about her offender. The pastor, ministers, mother, and sister have been a great support. Her offender was not raised in church; they believe in prayer but is not a praying person. She believes in prayer and does not think she would have made it without prayer. She believes prayer changes things. Participant one attends church and is an associate minister. She has talked with church members about her incarcerated loved one and has been encouraged by them. Her offender was raised in church, participated in YPHA, sang in the choir, and attended Sunday school, but no longer attends church. They believe very much in prayer. Participant one believes in prayer and stated that she definitely needs it.

The questions for week five dealt with communication. Participant one tried to be as supportive as possible; however, she felt there was a limit and would not allow herself to be mistreated or misused. She answered phone calls from the offender and scheduled visits. There were no video visits or jpay during her offender's incarceration. The participant stated that there were no financial barriers or travel limitations; however, it was disheartening to see her loved one in the condition of being incarcerated. Participant nine stated she communicated with her offender almost every day. If she did not receive a phone call, she emailed her. The communication vehicles used were phone calls, visitation, letters, and email. She did have some travel limitations due to mechanical issues with her vehicle, so she had to work more hours to get her mode of transportation repaired.



Focused Journal Assignment 2 asked the participants to elaborate on how the guest speakers' presentations for weeks two through four impacted them.

The week two presenter was Ms. Jamie Gee, manager of the MCOR. Participant one stated that her presentation was very informative and helpful. She presented information concerning programs available to returning citizens that help decrease recidivism. Ms. Gee talked about the lack of community support. The MCOR has a graduation program for those who complete the RCAA and is aligned with programs that can provide the returning citizen with the necessary skills to return to society. Participant two stated that the workshop given by Ms. Gee was very enlightening. The participant said she did not know about the reentry program. Still, she can see that this program is very helpful in getting an offender back into the community with a positive attitude and great hope of success. She stated, "They are doing a great work!" The participant passed the reentry program information on to those supporting an incarcerated loved one. Participant six stated that the presentation offered very inspiring information. He thinks the program is needed for the inmates and the community because people deserve a second chance, and this program is it. Participant nine says Ms. Gee enlightened her on much information she did not know existed. She said it seems an awesome program to start fresh and have a new way of life. She liked how Ms. Gee is passionate about what she does and how she directs her program. She did not know many who wanted a better life for the incarcerated. Participant nine said she would pass on the information about the reentry program, and she was thankful for it. Participant eleven stated that the workshop was very informative. She did not know assistance and programs for the incarcerated existed. Participant nine said, "It's very inspiring for me, and I want to do more outreach

in the church and the community to serve the people, including the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.”

Dr. Wanza Jackson-Mitchell, the warden from the Warren Correctional Institution, delivered the week three presentation. Participant one liked that she treated her facility as a “gated community.” The participant liked that she believed in second chances and treated the inmates with respect. She liked that the warden walked among the inmates and made herself known to them. The participant thought it was outstanding that the warden responded to questions from the inmates and the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. Participant two enjoyed the speaker and how she spoke about how she treated the prison as a gated community. The participant noticed how she walked, talked with the offenders often, and treated them with respect. The warden made them feel like they had a voice even though they were in prison, and she was concerned with their well-being. Participant nine thought Dr. Wanza was amazing. The participant stated that Dr. Wanza opened her eyes to see how the offenders form a family while away and how it is their gated community. The participant observed from the presentation that support and understanding are very important. She loved how the warden loved and respected the offenders; and in return, she received the same from them. The participant was greatly encouraged as a family member of an offender. Participant nine liked how she talked to them, acknowledged them, and listened to them, giving them a different kind of warden style. The participant noted that many perceive a warden as mean, authoritative, and condescending; however, Dr. Wanza Jackson-Mitchell performed her duty as a warden with her whole heart. This gave the participant great encouragement that their incarcerated loved ones could be treated fairly and respectfully.

Commissioner Debbie Lieberman gave the week four presentation. Participant one stated that Commissioner Lieberman was very committed to prison reform. Commissioner Lieberman realizes that there is a great need in government to change laws that hinder returning citizens. Participant one acknowledged that we need to be truly involved in changing laws that promote prison reform and that we must vote. Participant two stated that Commissioner Lieberman's presentation was very informational. Commissioner Lieberman, along with her colleagues, founded the reentry program. The commissioner lauded the reentry program and its great work and stated that the MCOR is a model program for reentry throughout Ohio. The participant further stated that she was encouraged for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated as the program supports their efforts to support their incarcerated loved ones. Participant six thought the speaker was great and that her program was great for the returning citizens and the community, particularly the families and loved ones of the incarcerated. Commissioner Lieberman inspired participant nine, who felt she had a lot of good information that would be helpful to the community.

The session for week five was led by a prominent returning citizen, whose stories of faith and family inspired the participants of this doctoral project. He is hereafter referred to as Returning Citizen 1 (Mr. RC1), and the second speaker is referred to hereafter as Returning Citizen 2 (Mr. RC2). They told their stories about their reentry into the community after incarceration. Participant six was inspired by Mr. RC1's story of becoming a reformed man. He noted in his journal that although Mr. RC1 had been through a lot, he is now a pillar in the community and is still accomplishing his goals. The participant is proud of the fact that Mr. RC1 is in the process of getting his criminal

record expunged. Participant six noted that Mr. RC2 had been in jail since he was a teen. Still, he is now a very smart, polished, and religious man because his family supported him throughout his incarceration of twenty-five years and upon his release. The participant feels the reentry program helped Mr. RC2 and that the program is great for returning citizens. Participant one saw returning citizen Mr. RC2 as an ambassador to the community. Participant one was encouraged that Mr. RC2 works with at-risk youth to deter criminal behavior and incarceration.

I reserved week six for the Enneagram assessment. Some participants completed the assessment. Some did not complete the assessment but were interested in the different personality types and how they interact. I gave an overview to those who completed the assessment, which was type seven and type five, and a brief description of the remaining seven personality types. The participants agreed that this assessment will help them in future interactions with their incarcerated loved ones. The rest of the session was used for the participants to complete their focused journal assignments.

### *Ethnographic Interview*

The Ethnographic interview was conducted with a participant who had incarcerated loved ones. The interview questions can be viewed in Appendix K. The first was her father, who was imprisoned for attempting to murder her mother. The second family member that was incarcerated was her brother. And the third family member to have endured incarceration was her husband, whom she met after he became a returning citizen. Her story is told in her own words as follows:

“As my memory recalls, my father (name withheld) was incarcerated for bodily harm to my mother. It was a domestic violence situation. She was approximately twenty-two years of age with already three children. She was working to get on with the WPAFB, in Fairborn, Ohio. I could recall the dark, cold stone walls that we, my siblings, and I, encountered while visiting my father. My grandmother on the maternal side, made sure to connect us with our father. It was so important to her to establish that as my mother was estranged from her father.”

“From my memory at a younger age, however, at a formidable age, I leaned towards those individuals that were strong in personality and to my recognition, had something going for themselves. Folks like teachers, gym teachers, assistant principals, and vice principals were the mentors and people I looked up to.”

“I never thought that I was missing a parent, although my father would walk in and out of my life from time to time, when he wasn’t running the streets and in and out of prison. I was just happy to see him.”

“He did not explain or apologize for being an absent parent; he was still growing himself. We looked to him as a big brother pretty much. We pounced on him when he came by during the holidays, which was few and far between; we sat on his lap, etc. I can remember my mother mentioning to us as if she were giving him another chance, ‘would you all like to be a family again,’ that was a strange question to me as I’ve never recalled what the so-called family dynamic was like.”

“It certainly impacted my relationship with men at a young age. I married at twenty-one years of age to the same type of man that my father was. They even had the same name, which was (name withheld). I never saw my father do drugs, I only heard he

was a heroin addict. I knew he was a man of the streets; and my brother Anthony, the youngest male of my father's boys, tried to gain street respect like my dad and ended up being shot for being mistaken for my father; he went on to visit prison walls more times than I can remember."

"My mother was the father figure if you will, by making sure we were disciplined as much as she could, but she used her lungs more than a belt and was always screaming and hollering at us. She was very stressed and had been injured by my father when he attacked her for not giving him money for drugs. The relationship between my paternal grandmother and grandfather was different; they helped us as much as they could, but my father's mother was a strong Christian woman, and always said look to the Lord."

When my father was in his mid-seventies, he developed small vessels disease, which meant the brain was shrinking, and his was faster than most due to his poly substance abuse. I was dating my now husband, who helped me with his care, his clothing, doctors' appointments, and other basic needs. I became his payee for the SSA funds that he managed to be awarded as he never worked and or receive any other pension. The roles were reverses, but in the right order to me because, although he was absent, when he aged and became feeble and disabled, I was there to support his well-being and care for him in his last days."

What influenced my military was that I did not have the funds to go to school or seek institutions of higher learning. Therefore, I joined the United States Navy where I was afforded the opportunity to complete another bachelor's degree and a master's in education. My father was around a few years younger during my college years and was even able to attend my high school graduation which was such a pleasant surprise to me,

my mom, and my siblings. Everyone expected more of me as my older siblings were a little mature at their ages than I, and I was expected to be the lookout and to make sure mom never saw the trouble they were in.”

“I found myself at home and comfortable talking with others about my experiences and life journey (position and place of employment withheld). Everyone has their own journey, and for me, it felt good and even cleansed my heart with speaking on how I got over and made it as a “forgotten victim.” During my childhood, children rarely spoke up about the things that were happening personally in their lives and the family’s business is no one else’s business but the family’s.”

“Seeing my mother work two jobs to make ends meet, although during her income producing years, or younger years, she could do so without wavering or breaking down. She was strong, independent and saw that we experienced and were exposed to many opportunities in life to help make us better adults and citizens.”

“I met my now husband in 1997 and we had more in common than we even knew. He was so very proud of his recovery and felt that he could not have a woman in his life than engaged in intoxicating beverage; therefore, he has eleven years sober; we have been together for twenty-seven years; he has thirty-eight years clean; and I have twenty-seven. Although I am not an alcoholic, I was a member of Al-anon.”

“I could have easily had the trait and or appetite for drugs as that is what I saw growing up. I did have mixture of a little street and ordinary life. We attended church with our maternal grandmother and a village did raise us, such as aunts, uncles, and older cousins when mom was busy working. It was great to spend the night and have slumber parties and make candied apples during the holidays and string popcorn and do

wholesome family things like parlor games, but that was mainly with my extended family and the larger unit, and not my immediate family like mom and dad and my siblings.

Each child appeared to have been raised in a fashion with mentors like older cousins; my brother had a tragic experience in his life as he witnessed my great uncle (name withheld) pass from cardiac arrest. He lay in my brother's arms panting and gasping for his last breath. Tony was very upset about that and lashed out at people. He was terrified after that of funerals and seeing anyone in a casket and deceased."

"I almost forgot to mention, my brother was what society considered a juvenile delinquent. He went on to continuously be arrested and do time in prison. My poor mother's heart broke once again. She refused to travel back and forth again for something (name withheld) did again to himself. Others thought that was terrible, but it was my mom's way of letting her son know, I have hit my own bottom, NO MORE!"

### *Post-Survey Questionnaire*

The post-survey questionnaire consisted of ten questions chosen to gauge the results of the workshop session of the doctoral project. The answers were selected from a Likert scale ranging from a through e: a) Always, b) Often, c) Moderately, d) Rarely, and e) Never. The results of the ten questions are annotated in the following post-survey questionnaire section.

For question one, (pre-survey questionnaire): It is important for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated to have a support system. Sixty-five percent returned a positive result; eighteen percent answered "Always," and forty-seven percent answered "Often."



For question two, (post-survey questionnaire): It is important for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated to offer emotional and financial support to the offender. Eighty percent answered “Always” and twenty percent answered “Often.” One hundred percent of the participants agreed that supporting the family and loved ones of the incarcerated is very important.

Question two of the post-survey questionnaire offers an overwhelmingly positive result compared to question one of the pre-survey questionnaires. The workshops and the speakers’ presentations validated this answer. There is a substantial increase in the data from the post-survey questionnaire.

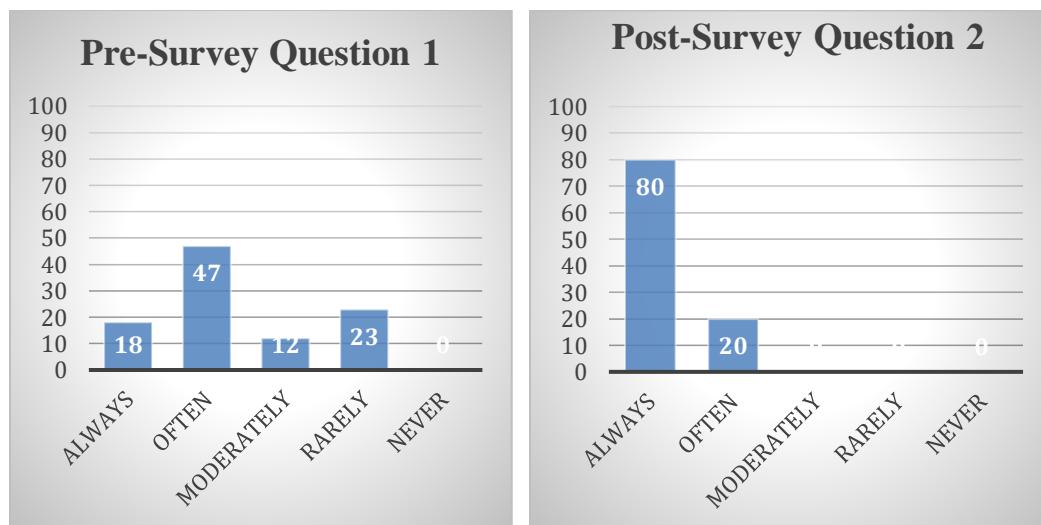


Chart 1: Post-Survey Questionnaire Graph for Pre-Survey Question 1& Post-Survey Question 2 Comparison Data Results

For question three: A support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated will provide a forum to address my needs and concerns and provide resources to assist me while I support my incarcerated loved one: sixty-seven percent

answered “Always,” seventeen percent answered “Often,” zero percent answered “Moderately,” sixteen percent answered “Rarely,” and zero percent answered “Never.”

When you compare the pre-survey question three to the post-survey question three, there is a substantial increase in the positive results going from sixty-four percent in the pre-survey questionnaire to eighty-four percent in the post-survey questionnaire.

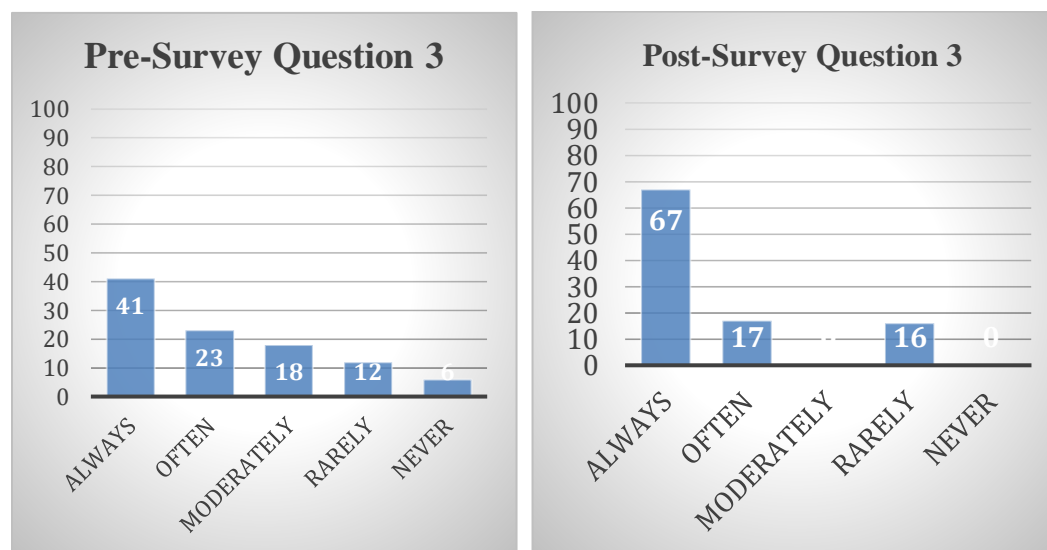


Chart 2: Post-Survey Questionnaire Graph Comparison Data Results for Pre-Survey Question 3 and Post-Survey Question 3.

For question four: As a participant in this doctoral project, I am inspired to act on the information I received during the workshops and presentations, and I would advocate for the church and the community to support and affirm the family and loved ones of the incarcerated: eighty percent answered “Always” and twenty percent answered “Often.” A one hundred percent positive result is found when you combine “Always” and “Often.” This response validates that the information from the workshops and speaker presentations inspired the participants to become active in the community to support the families and loved ones of the incarcerated.

For question five: The Montgomery County Office of Reentry supports and affirms the family and loved ones of the incarcerated through the programs and initiatives it offers to the offenders and returning citizens: eighty percent answered “Always” and twenty percent answered “Moderately.” The participants of the doctoral project were very impressed with the information presented by Ms. Gee, the MCOR Manager, and intended to tell someone about the program.

For question six: I have a greater awareness of the cultural trauma in the African American community as it relates to mass incarceration. Eighty percent answered “Always” and twenty percent answered “Often.” This same question relates to question seven in the pre-survey questionnaire. The results show that the post-survey response for question six significantly increased to one-hundred percent compared to the pre-survey response of sixty-four percent.

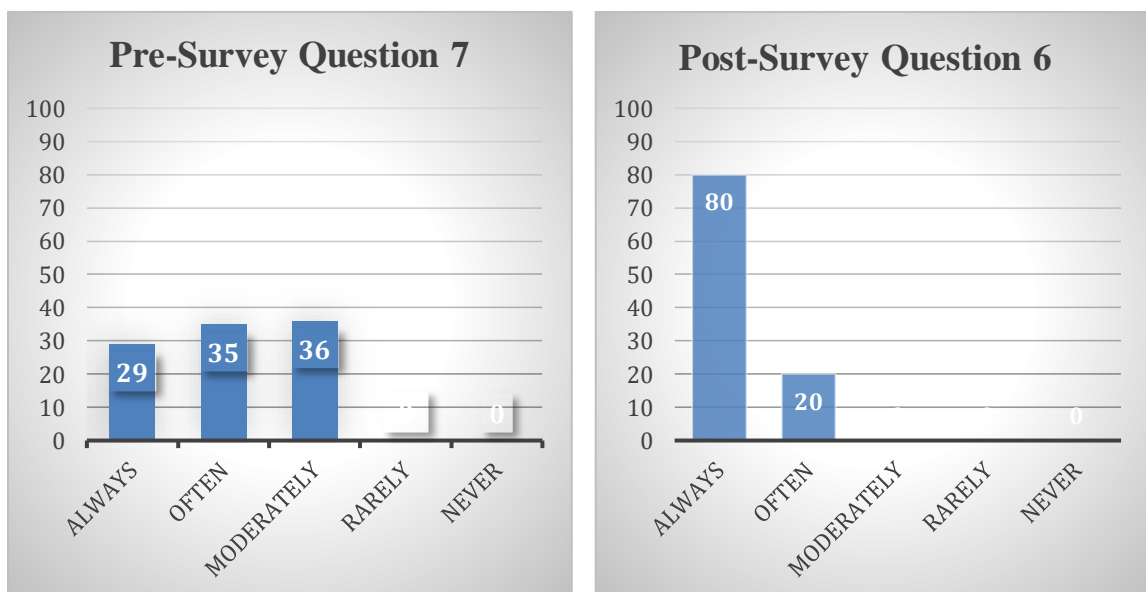


Chart 3: Post-Survey Questionnaire Graph Comparison Data Results for Pre-Survey Question 7 and Post-Survey Question 6.

For question eight (post-survey questionnaire): I will attend future workshops/support group forums for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. Sixty-seven percent answered “Always” and seventeen percent answered “Often.” This question relates to question eight in the pre-survey questionnaire, where thirty-five percent answered “Always” and twenty-nine percent answered “Often.” The results show that the post-survey response has significantly increased to eighty-four percent compared to the pre-survey response of sixty-four percent. The workshop sessions and the speakers’ presentations prompted the participants to act on what they learned about the support needed for their incarcerated loved ones to succeed upon reentry. This session encouraged and validated the family and loved ones of the incarcerated by relieving burdens and concerns about reentry and reunification.

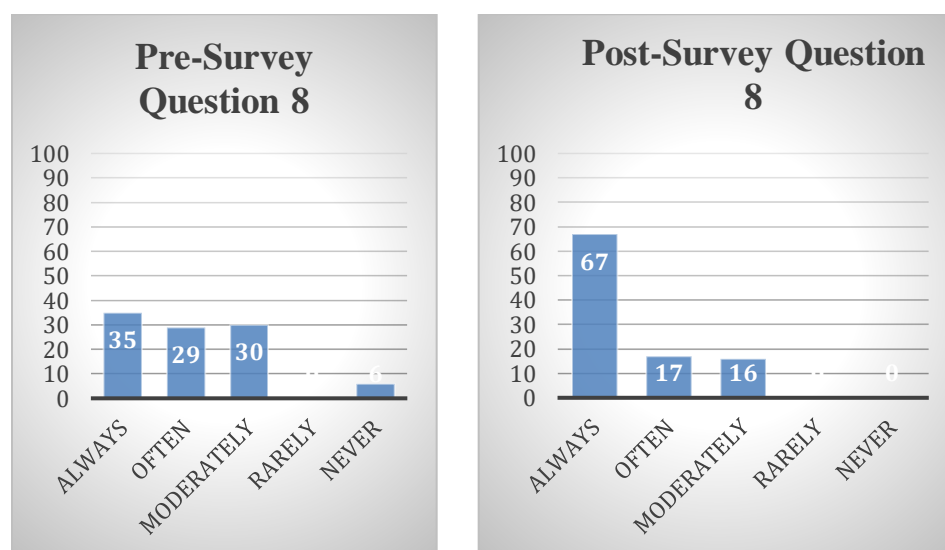


Chart 4: Post-Survey Questionnaire Graph Comparison Data Results for Pre-Survey Question 8 and Post-Survey Question 8.

For question nine: I will recommend others attend future workshops/support groups for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated: one hundred percent answered “Always.” The response to question nine tells me that mass incarceration has affected

someone we know personally: someone in our family, someone in the church, someone in our neighborhood, and someone in the workplace. The content and the passion with which our speaker presented in the workshop session touched many and inspired them to recommend others by passing on the information they received. The data results confirmed that the participants have embraced the concept of a support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. They stated they will recommend it to their family, church, and community.

For the final question, question ten: The information and inspiration I received from the workshops and presentations have changed my thinking and will influence my future interactions as the family and loved ones of the incarcerated: the results were outstanding. One hundred percent answered “Always.” In conclusion to the doctoral project, the data results, the research, the collaborative agencies, the church, and the community confirmed that this is a viable project and that a support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated should be implemented and available for everyone in the family, church, and community who has an incarcerated loved one.

The post-survey questionnaire was distributed to those who were present on the last day during session six. I spent the next several weeks getting the remaining questionnaires to those absent, and then getting the completed questionnaires from everybody. I recommend passing out the post-questionnaire at the final session and giving the participants time to complete it at the end of the session.

The overall results for the data obtained from the post-survey questionnaire are depicted in the stacked bar chart below. It shows the graphic comparison for each question.

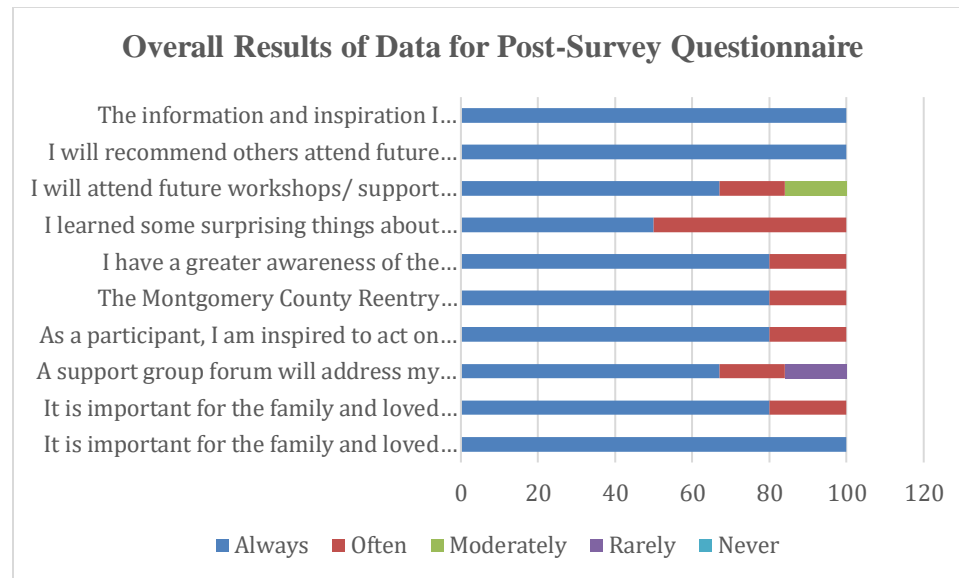


Chart 5: Post-Survey Questionnaire Bar Chart for Overall Data Results.

## Conclusion

The doctoral project, A Support Group Forum for the Family and Loved Ones of the Incarcerated, examined a need in the community that was overlooked and neglected. The family and loved ones of the incarcerated appear to be invisible to society. Their trauma and issues, such as mental health, financial instability, single parenting, and lack of resources, do not seem to be on the radar of any federal, state, or social service agencies. Yet, with the rise in mass incarceration, the dilemma of the family has also increased. This project proposed a support group forum to support the offender's family and loved ones, connect them to others suffering the same dilemma, and to resources to assist them in their daily lives.

In retrospect, I would add another fifteen minutes at the end of each session to have the participants complete their journal assignments before the session was over. The participants were dedicated to attending and supporting the study. They sacrificed their

time to attend the workshops, and I should have been astute and not sent them home with an additional task. In the future, I would ensure all tasks were completed in the allotted time for each session. If they could not be completed within the allotted time, I would make electronic submissions available to the participants.

Although the Enneagram assessment dealt with cognitive behavior and recognizing that changed thinking can change behavior, I missed an opportunity to bring in a speaker on mental health and counseling for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. I will investigate the availability of mental health and therapy for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. I realize this may come with financial restraints that must be addressed.

This project interacted with the MCOR. The MCOR has a wealth of collaboration partnerships that can be accessed through the creation of a nonprofit organization for the support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. At the completion of the doctoral project, I will begin developing the support group forum with the knowledge that it takes a collaborative effort to meet the many needs and requirements of families and loved ones of the incarcerated. MCOR has a note in its printed literature to the victims of the incarcerated that I want to share with you:

Ex-offenders come in many different shapes and sizes. In fact, there is great variety in the nature of the crimes they've committed. These crimes often produce profound wounds in their victims, who are our parents, spouses, siblings, children, friends, and neighbors. The Montgomery County Community-Wide Ex-Offender Reentry Task Force spent significant time contemplating the impact of these crimes, and the glaring fact that they were committed by the very people we aim to serve through this initiative. The Reentry Task Force wishes to formally acknowledge the impact that these crimes have had on not just the victims themselves, but their families, and sometimes their entire communities. Some of these crimes have created unpleasant, and sometimes atrocious, situations that the victims had to succumb to and endure at the hands of the offenders. And for this, the Reentry Task Force wishes to express its sincere compassion and empathy to

all people who have been victimized. The recommendations in the report are in no way meant to minimize the impact these crimes have had on the victims. We simply choose to put forth efforts that will make our homes, neighborhoods, and communities a safer place to live for future generations and to assure that these crimes will significantly decrease over the coming years.<sup>7</sup>

This statement has a significant perspective and can serve as a guide in the development of a Support Group Forum for the Family and Loved Ones of the Incarcerated. The plan going forward will be to establish the support group forum under a 501c3 umbrella, design a website, and develop literature to distribute when I speak at churches and community agencies to encourage them to partner with this new organization. This can be accomplished within the next year, and I look forward to working with the families and loved ones of the incarcerated and partnering with local agencies. I am especially excited to work with the MCOR and get the word out to the incarcerated families and loved ones that there is help for our offenders and returning citizens. As the family and loved ones, we must encourage them to endure their sentence and look forward to starting fresh when their time is complete and ready for reentry and reunification.

The intensive weeks at the Dayton Marriott, the Prophetic Preaching and Praxis mentors, the focus group meetings, and peer associates and alumni of the P3 focus group all greatly contributed to the development and direction of my doctoral project. Dr. Walker, Dr. Cummings, and Dr. Braam are phenomenal mentors, and Dr. Kennon is a phenomenal faculty consultant. It took me a while to grasp the concept and depth of the doctoral program, but they did not throw me away. Dr. Cummings is very perceptive,

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<sup>7</sup> Montgomery County Office of Reentry has this impact statement as a part of its core values that is shared with individuals and families. It is a part of its literature.



understanding, and encouraging as a mentor and urged me to continue my studies when I was unsure of my ability to complete the program. I am confident that my research, project, and partnerships concur that I should go forward in establishing a support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.

At the conclusion of the project, I was encouraged by the participants, the speakers, the collaborative partners, and the data to proceed with establishing a support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated. Within six months I will reengage with the participants and the context to gauge the efficacy of the interest and work with the intent to set up a non-profit organization, schedule meetings with local agencies and churches, and proceed to build on the foundation provided through the doctoral project.

**APPENDIX A**  
**EVENT FLYER**

10/9/23, 10:07 AM

Προσχημα081423.png

# DEAR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT!

Your participation is needed in a Six-Week Study for a Support Group Forum for the Family and Loved Ones of the Incarcerated. The six weekly sessions will be held Saturdays from 11:00 am until 12:30 pm at the Dayton Public Library.

## OBJECTIVE

This study aims to discover the needs, concerns, and requirements of the Family and Loved Ones of the incarcerated in the greater Dayton area, particularly the African American community.

Mass incarceration not only affects the offender; it affects the Family and Loved Ones of the offender.

## PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study involves a time commitment of 1.5 hours per week on Saturdays and a commitment to complete the follow-up assignments. It involves in-person participation at the designated facility (one session may be virtual), and the completion of questionnaires, interviews, and journal assignments. Refreshments will be provided for all in-person sessions.

These sessions will determine the development of an ongoing support group as a reunification model for the Family and Loved Ones of the Incarcerated.

## PLACE & TIME

All sessions will be held at the Dayton Public Library West, 300 Abbey Ave., 11:00 am - 12:30 pm

**Saturday, September 2, 2023**

**Saturday, September 9, 2023**

**Saturday, September 16, 2023**

**Saturday, September 23, 2023**

**Saturday, September 30, 2023**

**Saturday, October 7, 2023**

Thanks and God Bless!

Your participation in this project is greatly appreciated.



## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Must be 18 yrs and above
- Have family member and/or loved one who is incarcerated or has been incarcerated

## BENEFITS

- Support Group Forum
- Collaborative Resources



**Elder Joan M. Foy, Doctoral Candidate & Principal Investigator**

Please contact me via Email at [jlindsey417@gmail.com](mailto:jlindsey417@gmail.com) or Message me.

This research is approved by the United Theological Seminary Institutional Review Board (IRB).

**APPENDIX B**  
**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

# United Theological Seminary Informed Consent Form

Investigator Name: Elder Joan M. Foy

Contact Information: 937.305.8856; jlindsey417@gmail.com

Introduction: I am a doctoral student at United Theological Seminary.

Purpose: I am conducting a study on A Support Group Forum for the Families and Loved Ones of the Incarcerated.

Requirements for Participation: You are invited to the study because you are the family and/or loved one of the incarcerated. Please attend the support group forum and workshops that will provide support, encouragement, education, and development to support your incarcerated loved one. The study will consist of six two-hour sessions on Saturday mornings from 11:00 until 1:00 p.m. The intended outcome is to determine the need for a Support Group and Reunification model for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated.

Procedures: If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to attend six consecutive focus groups at a facility for one hour and thirty minutes on Saturday mornings (11:00-12:30) over six weeks. You will be asked to participate in surveys, interviews, and workshops and to record data in personal journals.

Human Subject Participation: All the participants must have consented to be in the study, and participants must be protected and treated fairly throughout the study. If offender interviews are conducted, they will follow the instructions of the institutional IRB for vulnerable populations.

Risks: There is a risk involved in dealing with each individual family dynamic and not knowing the depth of the grief, brokenness, and any discomforts to the participants. These may include physical, psychological, social, or economic discomfort or inconvenience. If you become uncomfortable at any time, you may excuse yourself from the discussion and return when you are able. Please let me know the problem and how I may assist on a case-by-case basis.

Benefits: The benefits of this research to society, and possibly the individual participant, will be to provide a service to the family and loved ones of the incarcerated that is not currently available. The benefit to the family and loved ones of the incarceration will be the provision of information, resources, education, and encouragement for the duration of the imprisonment and a strategy for family reunification after release.

Voluntariness: Participation is voluntary and you may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. You can also stop participating at any time. Your decision to participate will impact your awareness of the prison system and the information and resources available to you, your family, and your incarcerated loved ones. If something makes you feel uncomfortable while you are in the study, please contact me directly in person, on the phone, or via electronic communication. My contact information is at the top of this

consent form. You can refuse to respond to any or all the questions, and you will be able to withdraw from the process at any time; however, there will be a wealth of information and resource for you to take advantage of through your participation in this study.

**Confidentiality:** We will be careful to keep your information confidential, and we will ask you and all the focus group members to keep the discussion confidential as well. There is always a small risk of unwanted or accidental disclosure. The conversations and the focus groups will be recorded and transcribed only with your permission. Any notes, recordings, or transcriptions will be kept private. I will be the only one with access to your information. The files will be encrypted and password protected. You can decide whether you want your name used.

**Summary:** If you have any questions about the research study, please contact me.

**Signature:** Signing this paper means that you have read this or had it read to you and that you want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be mad if you do not sign this paper or even change your mind later. You agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done, and what to do.

**Signature of Person Agreeing to Participate in the Project/Study:**

**Date Signed:**

**APPENDIX C**  
**PRE-SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

### Pre-survey Questionnaire

Please provide your name, email, and phone number at the top of this questionnaire.

1) The family and loved ones offer financial support to the offender:

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

2) The family and loved ones are aware of resources to assist them as they support the offender:

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

3) A support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated will provide many benefits for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated:

- a) Always
- b) Often c)
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

4) You can talk to people in the church, community, and workplace about your incarcerated loved one:

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

5) The church and the community should support and affirm the family and loved ones of the incarcerated:

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never



6) Prayer is an essential activity for you (the family and loved ones) on your journey with the offender:

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

7) You are aware of the cultural trauma associated with mass incarceration:

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

8) Would you attend a support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated as a valid concept and as a future initiative?

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

**APPENDIX D**  
**POST-SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

### Post-Survey Questionnaire

- 1) It is important for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated to have a support system:
  - a) Always
  - b) Often
  - c) Moderately
  - d) Rarely
  - e) Never
  
- 2) It is important for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated to offer emotional and financial support to the offender as their support system:
  - a) Always
  - b) Often
  - c) Moderately
  - d) Rarely
  - e) Never
  
- 3) A support group forum for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated will provide a forum to address my needs and concerns, and provide resources to assist me while I support my incarcerated loved one:
  - a) Always
  - b) Often
  - c) Moderately
  - d) Rarely
  - e) Never
  
- 4) As a participant in this doctoral project, I am inspired to act on the information I received during the workshops and presentations, and I would advocate for the church and the community to support and affirm the family and loved ones of the incarcerated:
  - a) Always
  - b) Often
  - c) Moderately
  - d) Rarely
  - e) Never
  
- 5) The Montgomery County Reentry Program supports and affirms the family and loved ones of the incarcerated through the programs and initiatives it offers to the offenders:
  - a) Always
  - b) Often
  - c) Moderately
  - d) Rarely
  - e) Never

6) I have a greater awareness of the cultural trauma in the African American community as it relates to mass incarceration:

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

7) I learned some surprising things about myself by taking the Enneagram assessment, and I feel it will help my personal growth and better my communication:

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

8) I will attend future workshops/support group forums for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated:

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

9) I will recommend others attend future workshops/support groups for the family and loved ones of the incarcerated:

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

10) The information and inspiration I received from the workshops and presentations have changed my thinking and will influence my future interactions as the family and loved one of the incarcerated:

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Moderately
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

Please Circle

Gender:      Male

Female

Age group:   under 21   21-25   26-34   35-44   45-54   55-64   65-74   75+

Marital Status:   Single   Married   Divorced   Widowed

Income: 7,500-14,999 15,000-24,999 25,000-34,999 35,000-49,999 50,000-75,999+

Education Level: High School College or Tech School Masters Doctors

**APPENDIX E**  
**RCAA WORKSHOP**



## **Reentry Career Alliance Academy (RCAA) Workshops**

### **2023**

#### **Week 1**

Tuesday	9:00 – 10:30	Action, Alliance & Accountability (Reentry Staff)
	11:00 – 12:30	Marketing Myself on the Application (Reentry Staff)
	1:00 – 2:30	Strength Finders – Part 1 (D. Crews – Crews Strengths)
Wednesday	9:00 – 10:30	Substance Abuse & Behavioral Health (Addiction Servs, ADAMAHS Brd)
	11:00 – 12:30	Resume Workshop (Clothes That Work Staff)
	1:00 – 2:30	Interpersonal Relationships (C. Mitchell – UMADAOP of Dayton)
Thursday	9:00 – 10:30	Stages of Change (J. Gee, J. Newport Reentry Staff)
	11:00 – 12:30	Personal Branding & Interview Strategies (Reentry Staff)
	1:00 – 2:30	Fin. Awn: Goal Setting & Budgeting (A. Runk & D. Schweitzer (Day Air)
Friday	10:00 – 2:00	Clothes That Work and Ohio Means Jobs (By Appointment)

#### **Week 2**

**Case Management Support – Individualized Assessments Throughout Week 2**

Tuesday	9:00 – 10:30	Networking with a Purpose (J. Smith – MEYOT)
	11:00 – 12:30	Violence Prevention & Determined Identity (Reentry Staff & C. Landrum)
	1:00 – 2:30	Strength Finders – Part 2 (D. Crews – Crews Strengths)
Wednesday	9:00 – 10:30	Attitude Determines Altitude – Job Retention (R. Sheaff – DHL)
	11:00 – 12:30	Strategies for Success (Ohio Means Jobs)
	1:00 – 2:30	Legal Matters (T. Snelling – Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project)
Thursday	9:00 – 10:30	Victim Awareness (S. Hunt, Point of Contact – Mont. Cnty Prosecutors Office)
	11:00 – 12:30	Social Responsibility (Rev. Dr. A. Diebel – Volunteer)
	1:00 – 2:30	Fin. Awareness: Checking (A. Runk & D. Schweitzer – Day Air Credit Union)
Friday	10:00 – 2:00	Clothes That Work and Ohio Means Jobs (By Appointment)

#### **Week 3**

Tuesday	9:00 – 10:30	Personal Responsibility (M. Newson, Director Mont. County Fatherhood)
	11:00 – 12:30	Education (J. Maier – Sinclair, D. Heeter – MVCTC, J. Gazda Dayton Lib.)
	1:00 – 2:30	Family Matters – Conflict Resolution (Dayton Mediation Center)
Wednesday	9:00 – 10:30	Keeping the Job (M. Webber – Volunteer)
	11:00 – 12:30	Culture: How We Live & Work (L. Singh – Volunteer)
	1:00 – 2:30	Fin Awar: Deeper into Credit/Lending Decisions (A. Runk & D. Schweitzer – Day Air)
Thursday	9:00 – 10:30	Spirituality Matters (Rev. Dr. A. Diebel, Volunteer)
	11:00 – 12:30	Employment Planning Strategies (OMI/WIOA, N. Owens, A. Addison or J. Updyke, B. Daniels)
	1:00 – 2:30	Housing Education (E. Redmon – Miami Valley Fair Housing)
Friday	10:00-12:00	Mock Interviews: Testing Your Interviewing Skills – By Appointment (ODJFS, Talent Services & Community Volunteers)

#### **Week 4**

Tuesday	9:00 – 10:30	Workplace & Life Safety (K. Sedensky – Montgomery County Risk Management)
	11:00 – 12:30	Healthy Habits (E. Jones & E. Claiborne – PHDMC)
	1:00 – 2:30	Graduation Rehearsal (Reentry Staff & Cohort Members)
Thursday	9:00 – 10:30	RCAA Graduation Ceremony

Revised 12/14/2022

## **APPENDIX F**

### **RCAA 2023 SCHEDULE**





### **Reentry Career Alliance Academy 2023**

<b>Cohort</b>	<b>Orientation 10:00AM &amp; 1:00PM</b>	<b>*Commitment Period</b>	<b>Key Cohort Dates</b>	<b>Graduation Dates 9:00AM –11:30AM</b>
1	1/25/2023	1/31/2023 – 2/23/2023	<u>2/3/2023 &amp; 2/10/2023</u> CTW: 10:00AM – 1:00PM OMJ: 9:00AM – 2:00PM <b>Mock Interviews:</b> 2/17/2023 - 9:00AM – 11:30AM	Thursday, February 23, 2023 Montgomery County Administration Building- Lower Level Auditorium 451 W. Third St, Dayton, OH 45422
2	2/22/2023	2/28/2023 – 3/23/2023	<u>3/3/2023 &amp; 3/10/2023</u> CTW: 10:00AM – 1:00PM OMJ: 9:00AM – 2:00PM <b>Mock Interviews:</b> 3/17/2023 - 9:00AM – 11:30AM	Thursday, March 23, 2023 Montgomery County Administration Building- Lower Level Auditorium 451 W. Third St, Dayton, OH 45422
3	3/29/2023	4/4/2023 – 4/27/2023	<u>4/7/2023 &amp; 4/14/2023</u> CTW: 10:00AM – 1:00PM OMJ: 9:00AM – 2:00PM <b>Mock Interviews:</b> 4/21/2023 - 9:00AM – 11:30AM	Thursday, April 27, 2023 Montgomery County Administration Building- Lower Level Auditorium 451 W. Third St, Dayton, OH 45422
4	4/26/2023	5/2/2023 – 5/25/2023	<u>5/5/2023 &amp; 5/12/2023</u> CTW: 10:00AM – 1:00PM OMJ: 9:00AM – 2:00PM <b>Mock Interviews:</b> 5/19/2023 - 9:00AM – 11:30AM	Thursday, May 25, 2023 Montgomery County Administration Building- Lower Level Auditorium 451 W. Third St, Dayton, OH 45422
5	5/31/2023	6/6/2023 – 6/29/2023	<u>6/9/2023 &amp; 6/16/2023</u> CTW: 10:00AM – 1:00PM OMJ: 9:00AM – 2:00PM <b>Mock Interviews:</b> 6/23/2023 - 9:00AM – 11:30AM	Thursday, June 29, 2023 Montgomery County Administration Building- Lower Level Auditorium 451 W. Third St, Dayton, OH 45422
6	7/26/2023	8/1/2023 – 8/24/2023	<u>8/4/2023 &amp; 8/11/2023</u> CTW: 10:00AM – 1:00PM OMJ: 9:00AM – 2:00PM <b>Mock Interviews:</b> 8/18/2023 - 9:00AM – 11:30AM	Thursday, August 24, 2023 Montgomery County Administration Building- Lower Level Auditorium 451 W. Third St, Dayton, OH 45422
7	8/23/2023	8/29/2023 – 9/21/2023	<u>9/1/2023 &amp; 9/8/2023</u> CTW: 10:00AM – 1:00PM OMJ: 9:00AM – 2:00PM <b>Mock Interviews:</b> 9/15/2023 - 9:00AM – 11:30AM	Thursday, September 21, 2023 Montgomery County Administration Building- Lower Level Auditorium 451 W. Third St, Dayton, OH 45422
8	9/20/2023	9/26/2023 – 10/19/2023	<u>10/2/2023 &amp; 10/9/2023</u> CTW: 10:00AM – 1:00PM OMJ: 9:00AM – 2:00PM <b>Mock Interviews:</b> 10/13/2023 - 9:00AM – 11:30AM	Thursday, October 19, 2023 Montgomery County Administration Building- Lower Level Auditorium 451 W. Third St, Dayton, OH 45422
9	10/18/2023	10/24/2023–11/16/2023	<u>10/27/2023 &amp; 11/10/2023</u> CTW: 10:00AM – 1:00PM OMJ: 9:00AM – 2:00PM <b>Mock Interviews:</b> 11/13/2023 - 9:00AM – 11:30AM	Thursday, November 16, 2023 Montgomery County Administration Building- Lower Level Auditorium 451 W. Third St, Dayton, OH 45422

#### **FOOTNOTES:**

CTW = Clothes That Work (Friday), Job Mall, 1133 S. Edwin C. Moses Blvd, Suite 100, Dayton, Ohio 45417  
 \*Commitment Period = Tuesday Through Thursday 9am-2:30pm Weekly, Subject to Change As Needed/Holidays  
 Workshops Scheduled at The Reentry Training Center, 1111 S. Edwin C Moses Blvd., Suite 1175, Dayton, Ohio 45417

## **APPENDIX G**

### **MCOR STAFF, PROGRAMS, AND SERVICES**

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF REENTRY

### Action, Alliance & Accountability

Website: [www.mcoho.org](http://www.mcoho.org)

**Mission Statement:** Serving the citizens of Montgomery County with programs and services that minimize barriers to effective reentry and promote a reduction in recidivism

Jamie Gee, Manager	<a href="mailto:geej@mcoho.org">geej@mcoho.org</a>	Office: (937) 225-6460	Mobile: (937) 546-9004
Quinn Howard, Reentry Program Coordinator	<a href="mailto:howardq@mcoho.org">howardq@mcoho.org</a>	Office: (937) 225-6438	Mobile: (937) 581-3422
Sterling Titus, Reentry Program Coordinator	<a href="mailto:tituss@mcoho.org">tituss@mcoho.org</a>	Office: (937) 496-7047	Mobile: (937) 212-7726
January Newport, Reentry Program Coordinator	<a href="mailto:newportj@mcoho.org">newportj@mcoho.org</a>	Office: (937) 496-3312	Mobile: (937) 791-8733
Monica Lofton, Reentry & Family Services Case Specialist	<a href="mailto:loftonm@mcoho.org">loftonm@mcoho.org</a>	Office: (937) 496-7005	Mobile: (937) 791-8749
Paige Rogalinski, Volunteer Coordinator & Resource Navigator	<a href="mailto:rogalinski@mcoho.org">rogalinski@mcoho.org</a>	Office: (937) 496-7189	Mobile: (937) 546-9448
Tina Mobley, Secretary – Job Mall/Job Center	<a href="mailto:mobleyt@mcoho.org">mobleyt@mcoho.org</a>	Office: (937) 496-7129   6604	Mobile: (937) 270-8563

### OFFICE LOCATIONS

**JOB MALL:** Administrative Office – 1133 S. Edwin C. Moses Blvd, Suite 370, Dayton, Ohio 45417

Hours of Operation: Mon-Fri 8:30am-5:00pm | Reception Line: (937) 496-7129 Fax: (937) 225-6426

**JOB CENTER:** Reentry Training Center (RTC) & Computer Lab – 1111 S. Edwin C. Moses Blvd, Suite 1175, Dayton, Ohio 45417

Hours of Operation: Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm | Reception Line: (937) 496-6604

### PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Reentry Career Alliance Academy | \*Eichelberger Prison Outreach Program

Network, Support & Advocacy | "Welcome Home" Reentry Resources

Orientation Intake & Needs Assessment | Offender Workforce Development | Case Management & Supportive Services

Direct Employer Referrals with Reentry Career Alliance Academy Completion & Voluntary Drug Screen Compliance

Community Resource Connections: Employment, Housing, Education, Behavioral Health, Life Skills, Social Services & Legal Aide

*\*This project was funded by a grant from the Jack W. and Sally D. Eichelberger Foundation of The Dayton Foundation*



## MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF REENTRY

### What is the Reentry Career Alliance Academy (RCAA)?

The RCAA consists of intake orientation and 10-Day career focused work readiness curriculum, leading to formal graduation ceremony. The RCAA provides reentry participants with an opportunity to connect with local community resource providers, employers, and case management. The 4-week program model consists of 29 workshops, Tuesday through Thursday, from 9am-2:30pm, concluding with focus group and graduation ceremony. The holistic workshops are coordinated & facilitated by Montgomery County Office of Reentry staff and consultants, in partnership with collaborative community partners to address the criminogenic needs of individuals with criminal history barriers and life challenges. Workshop topics include: Reentry Planning, Offender Workforce Development & Retention, Personal/Family & Social Responsibility, Behavioral Health, Housing, Healthcare, Behavioral Management, Financial Literacy, Networking, Legal Issues, Education, and other supportive services. All RCAA intake orientation and workshops are held at the Reentry Training Center (RTC) located in the Job Center, 1111 S. Edwin C. Moses Blvd, Suite 1175 Dayton, Ohio 45417.

(Rev 4/22)

### RCAA Graduate Benefits:

- Community Resource Connections
- Daily Transportation Pass
- Onsite Case Management
- Resume Prep & Mock Interview
- Career Passport Portfolio
- Move-In Assistance Eligibility
- Network Building
- Welcoming Environment
- Favorable Drug Test = Employment Referral

### Next Orientation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: 10am or 1pm

Montgomery County Reentry Training Center (RTC)  
1111 S. Edwin C. Moses Blvd, Suite 1175  
Dayton, Ohio 45417  
(937) 496-6604



## **APPENDIX H**

### **MCOR SUPPORT GROUP FLYER**

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF REENTRY



You are invited to join us!

## IN THE MEANTIME...

### Reentry Support Group

*Do you need a Support Network?*

*The ~~en~~ The Meantim Support Group*, is a healthy space to network and engage in supportive discussion with others in the reentry community.

*This conversation is for you!*

Please join us the \*2nd Tuesday online & Last Wednesday of the month in person at the Office of Reentry Training Center in the Job Center



#### Volunteer Moderators & Supporters:

John Smith Jr.  
Lisa Singh  
Rev. Dr. Alice Diebel  
Pastor Jeffery Carson Jr.

**Join us the 2nd Tuesday of the Month ONLINE @ 7PM-8PM:**

**Meeting ID: 873 9669 9373 Passcode: 745922**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87396699373?pwd=bGdJY3hTSXk5bkIpVk5hc3kyaURtdz09>

**Join us the Last Wednesday of the Month IN-PERSON @ 6PM-7:30PM:**

*\*Location Change & Time*

**Montgomery County Office of Reentry—Training Center  
1111 S. Edwin C. Moses Blvd, Suite 1175  
Dayton, Ohio**

*\*Contact Paige Rogalinski, Volunteer Coordinator, with questions:*

*rogalinski@mcohio.org or 937-496-7189/937-546-9448*

## **APPENDIX I**

### **FOCUSED JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT 1**

### Focused Journal Assignment 1:

Please elaborate on the questions for each week using your journal, and please use “essay format” for your answers rather than yes / no answers . . .

#### Week 1 Questions:

- 1) What kind of support does the family/loved ones offer the offender?
- 2) What is your relationship to the offender?
- 3) Does the offender have any children?
- 4) How is the offender’s relationship with his children and/or with other family members?
- 5) Do you assist with the financial support of the children and/or the offender?

#### Week 2 Questions:

- 1) Do you attend church or a place of worship?
- 2) Do you talk to anyone in the church or elsewhere about your loved one’s incarceration? Who?
- 3) Was the offender raised in church?
- 4) Does the offender believe in prayer?
- 5) Do you believe in prayer? Why?

#### Week 5 Questions:

- 1) How often do you communicate with your incarcerated loved one?
- 2) What form of communication do you use to communicate with your incarcerated loved one?
  - a. Phone call
  - b. Visitations
  - c. Video visits
  - d. Letters
  - e. Jpay / Getting Out
  - f. Other (explain)
- 3) Do/did you have any of the following communication barriers?
  - a. Financial difficulties (money for phone or commissary)
  - b. Travel unavailability (no vehicle)
  - c. Travel unavailability (no gas money/or mechanical issues)
  - d. Technical limitations (lack of Internet provider or electronic devices)
  - e. Lack of technical understanding to navigate ODRC systems.
- 4) Do you require additional information and/or resources to support your incarcerated loved one? (explanation and resources to navigate ODRC systems and resources)
- 5) Do you send packages to your loved one? If so, how often? If not, why?

## **APPENDIX J**

### **FOCUSED JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT 2**



### Focused Journal Assignment 2:

Please elaborate on the guest speakers and tell how each session impacted you . . . Thank you all so much for your input in this project!

#### Week 2 journal assignment:

Please discuss how the workshop conducted by Ms. Jamie Gee, Manager of Montgomery County Office of Reentry, has informed, impacted, and inspired you to dig deeper. (You can refer to your handouts from the Montgomery County Reentry Office).

#### Week 3 journal assignment:

Please elaborate on the workshop “A Word from the Warden” by Dr. Wanza Jackson-Mitchell. Tell how it has informed and impacted you to act.

#### Week 4 journal assignment:

Please elaborate on the presentation by Commissioner Debbie Lieberman and how it has informed you and perhaps inspired you to act.

#### Week 5 journal assignment:

Please elaborate on the presentations by Mr. Returning Citizen 1, Program Coordinator, and Mr. Returning Citizen 2, and how you were impacted and inspired.

Thanks again. Call me if you have any questions or concerns . . .

God Bless, Elder Joan Foy

**APPENDIX K**  
**ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

## Ethnographic Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your incarcerated loved one.
2. How did having a family member incarcerated affect you and your siblings?
3. Did your father take time to explain? Apologize? Or attempt to make it up to the family?
4. How do you think it impacted your relationships? Dating? Marriage? Your Mom? Did you become a family again?
5. Did you develop a relationship after you became an adult?
6. You went into the military. Did your Dad or Mom influence this decision?
7. Overall, how did having family members incarcerated impact you as a child? As an adult?
8. You later married and worked (name of employer withheld). Did your relationship with your father have any bearing on those decisions?
9. You and your husband both came to terms with incarceration, reentry, and reunification. Can you elaborate on those things?
10. Tell me about “eleven years sober.”

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